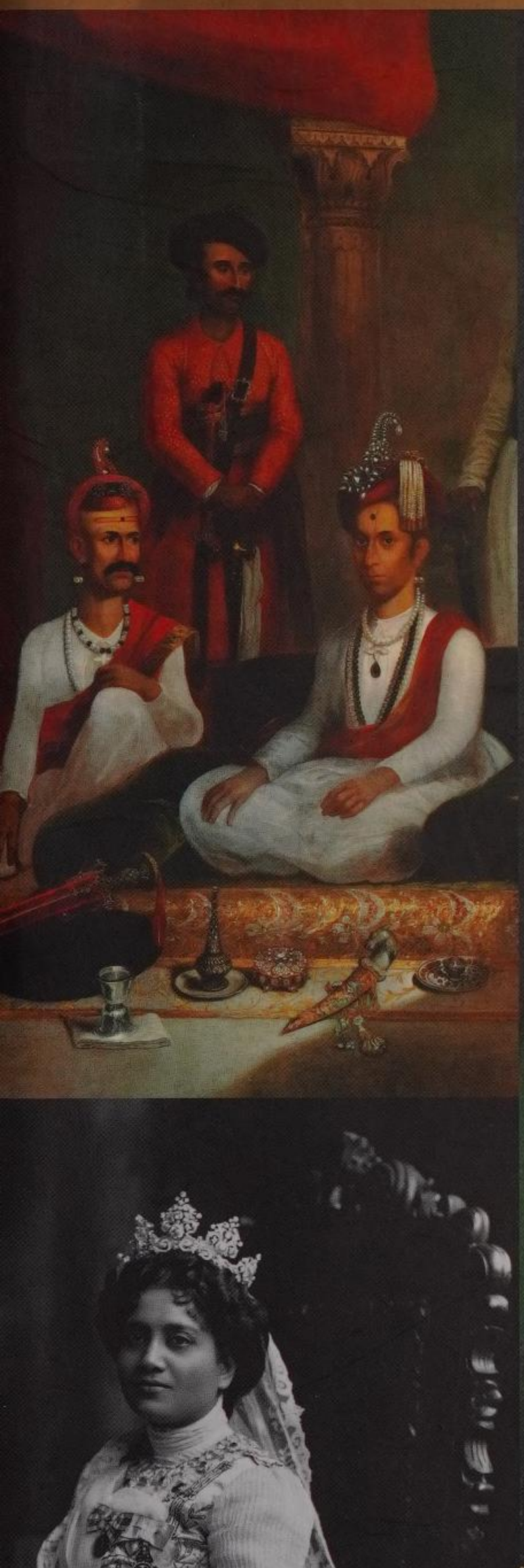
Portraits in Princely India

1700–1947



edited by
Rosie Llewellyn-Jones

SHOUT
SHARE
IT

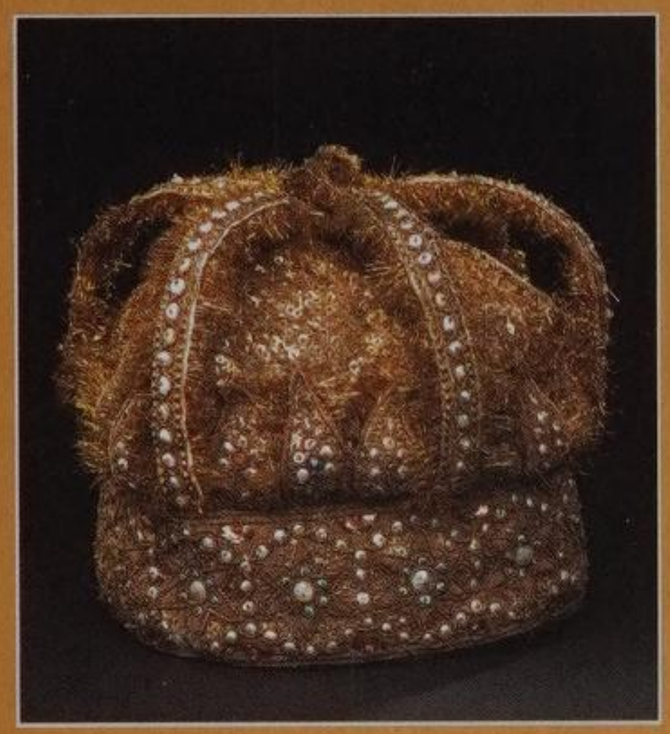
PORTRAITS IN PRINCELY INDIA
1700–1947

edited by Rosie Llewellyn-Jones

Since Independence the princes and regional rulers of India have mostly been seen as anachronistic figures, too closely associated with the former colonial government, and often a byword for extravagance, sybaritic lifestyles, and mild despotism. When they were stripped of their privy purses by Indira Gandhi in 1971, there were more protests in Britain than in India. No serious efforts have been made to put these men, and a few women, in a pictorial context, to analyse the differing styles of portraiture favoured by them, and the motives behind the pictures. *Portraits in Princely India* examines the rulers at war, at play, in the durbar, visiting shrines, temples, and mosques, and receiving ambassadors.

The stories behind the portraits are examined too: Why were they commissioned? Who commissioned them? What were the rulers saying about themselves (and sometimes their ancestors)? The more one gazes at these important but hitherto neglected works of art, the more questions are raised. This book attempts to answer/interpret some of them.

The arrival of European painters in late 18th-century India presented a new opportunity for Indian rulers to commission self-portraits of a different kind, and also to influence indigenous artists in new styles and paint mediums. The advent of photography brought a further opportunity for them to be pictured in different ways, e.g. after a successful tiger hunt or welcoming a British official. In short, there is a wealth of paintings, especially lesser-known provincial pictures, that are subjected here to modern, critical analysis while presenting handsome images to the reader.



The publication of this book has been made
possible by support received from
the Mehrangarh Museum Trust, Jodhpur and
M.R. Morarka Foundation, Mumbai

Portraits in Princely India
1700–1947

BOURNE AND SHEPHERD'S

ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC ALBUM

OF

SCENES & PERSONAGES

CONNECTED WITH

H.R.H. the Prince of Wales'

TOUR IN INDIA

1876.

Portraits in Princely India

1700–1947

edited by ROSIE LLEWELLYN-JONES

Marg publications

General Editor
PRATAPADITYA PAL
Associate Editor
RASHMI PODDAR

Executive Editors
SAVITA CHANDIRAMANI
GAYATRI W. UGRA
Text Editor
RIVKA ISRAEL
Editorial Executive
ARNAVAZ K. BHANSALI

Designer
NAJU HIRANI
Senior Production Executive
GAUTAM V. JADHAV
Production Executive
VIDYADHAR R. SAWANT

Vol. 59 No. 4
June 2008
ISBN 10: 81-85026-86-6
ISBN 13: 978-81-85026-86-2

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 2008-307092

Marg is a registered trademark of Marg Publications
© Marg Publications, 2008
All rights reserved

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored, adapted, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, or translated in any language or performed or communicated to the public in any manner whatsoever, or any cinematographic film or sound recording made therefrom without the prior written permission of the copyright holders.
This edition may be exported from India only by the publishers, Marg Publications, and by their authorized distributors and this constitutes a condition of its initial sale and its subsequent sales.

Published by Radhika Sabavala for Marg Publications
on behalf of the National Centre for the Performing Arts
at 24, Homi Mody Street, Mumbai 400 001.

Processing by Reproscan, Mumbai 400 013.
Printed by Thomson Press (India) Ltd., Navi Mumbai 400 708.

Captions
Pages 1, 2, 4–7: see pages 79, 25, 112, 65, 130, 130.
Page 3: Portrait of Maharaja Sardar Singh of Marwar-Jodhpur (r. 1885-1912). Oil on canvas. Collection of Maharaja Gaj Singh II of Marwar-Jodhpur.

Marg's quarterly publications receive support from the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust – Endowment Fund

CONTENTS

8 Introduction
Rosie Llewellyn-Jones

16 Artists from Afar: Company Painters in the Princely Courts of India 1770–1900
Charles Greig

30 Portraits of the Nawabs: Images from the Lucknow Court 1775–1856
Rosie Llewellyn-Jones

44 Portraiture at the Tanjore Maratha Court: Toward Modernity in the Early 19th Century
Indira Viswanathan Peterson

58 Hyderabad: 150 Years of Court Paintings
Rosie Llewellyn-Jones

68 Dressed for Success: Indian Princes and Western Symbols of Power
Amin Jaffer

82 Dazzling Baubles: Gems and Jewels in Princely Portraits
Usha Bala Krishnan

98 Depicting Kingship: Portraits of the Maharajas of Jaipur
Vibhuti Sachdev and Giles Tillotson

110 Presenting an Image: Princely Photography in India
Sophie Gordon

124 Imperial Politicians and Bejewelled Barons: Changing Representations of Indian Princes after 1858
Barbara N. Ramusack

134 Index

136 Contributors

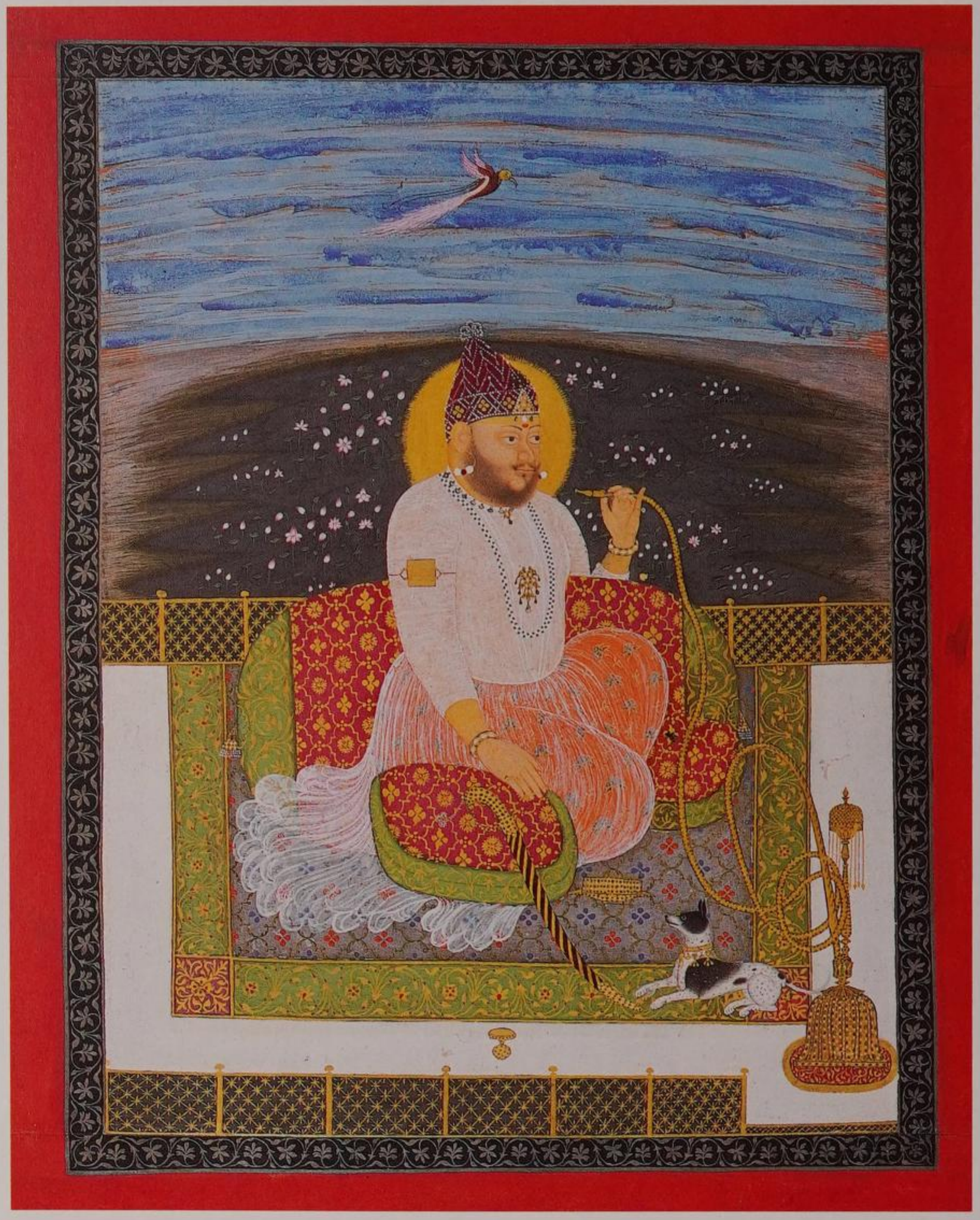
Introduction

ROSIE LLEWELLYN-JONES

When Rudyard Kipling declared that "God created the Maharajas to offer Mankind a Spectacle", he spoke half in jest and half in awe. There was indeed nothing more spectacular than the ruler of a princely state in full dress, weighed down by a jewelled turban, strings of pearls, rough-cut emeralds, and rubies round his neck, jewelled armlets, earrings, sashes, brooches, ceremonial swords, finger-rings, and wearing a shimmering silk, gossamer muslin, or heavy gold-embroidered coat. To the artist, and later the photographer, these majestic, glittering figures were irresistible. Mughal painters showed the rulers with a nimbus or halo surrounding their heads, like medieval Christian saints, in an attempt to portray their divine nature. Naive artists sometimes made the ruler twice the size of other figures in the painting, to emphasize his importance. Indeed, there is often more in these portraits than we can appreciate today at first glance, because the symbolic meaning of costumes, jewels, crowns, swords, furniture, animals, and other props have been lost to us through the passage of time. The intention of this book, which covers royal portraiture from the early 18th century to the mid-20th,[1] is to look behind the immediate figures of the rulers, and the outward show, and discover what these men and women wanted to say about themselves to the viewer.

1. Portrait of Raja Sidh Sen (1684–1727) of Mandi. Pahari School, Mandi, c. 1700. Jagdish and Kamla Mittal Museum of Indian Art, Hyderabad.

It has been cogently argued that in pre-colonial Indian "kingdoms" or semi-autonomous states, the idea of the "anointed king" or ruler was intimately connected with the political structure of the kingdom or state.[2] One could not exist without the other. The phrase attributed to France's greatest king, Louis XIV, "*L'Etat, c'est moi*" (I am the State) could equally well apply to the rulers of even the smaller Indian states like Pudukkottai, with a total of 3,100 square kilometres. Significantly, many of the painted portraits under discussion in this book were displayed in the palaces of the rulers themselves, often in the durbar hall, where ministers and courtiers regularly gathered to pay homage. They were also there to receive their orders, and, if they were fortunate or favoured, to receive gifts of honour, titles, and lands. The bestowal of gifts by the ruler on his subjects was essentially a royal activity, as historians and anthropologists have pointed out. The recipients benefited of course from the royal largesse, but the biggest benefit accrued to the donor, the "king", because he was demonstrating in public the exercise of his kingly powers. Those who went rewarded and honoured from the durbar hall carried with them an invisible portion of the king himself, and by implication, the kingdom and responsibility for it. The ruler's gifts bound the recipients to him not only symbolically and morally, but also politically.[3]



2. Maharaja Sawant Singh (1752–65) of Orchha. Orchha School, Central India, c. 1760. Jagdish and Kamla Mittal Museum of Indian Art, Hyderabad.

The ruler's authority was reinforced by his portraits in the durbar hall. Giles Tillotson and Vibhuti Sachdev, in describing the portraits of the Jaipur monarchy, point out that the ideology associated with a ruler requires an audience. Miniature portraits, which were bound into albums or kept loose in portfolios, were of necessity only shown to an elite few. But large-scale paintings, using gouache on cloth, and showing local rulers, were hung from palace walls, and the walls themselves were

used for mural paintings on the same theme. Thus the palace became a vehicle for kingly propaganda, demonstrating royal life made into art, and art manifested in the figure of the king himself. Audiences in the durbar halls, too, were the subject of many paintings. The monarch was always clearly identifiable, seated on a throne, or standing centrestage surrounded by deferential men. In paintings renowned for their naturalness and attention to detail, like those in the *Padshahnama* album, created in the mid-17th century, the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan is nevertheless given an unearthly golden halo.[4] Similarly, in a durbar scene at the palace in Udaipur, painted by a Mewari artist about 1832, Maharana Jawan Singh is shown seated on a European sofa entertaining the Governor General, Lord Bentinck. The large retinue of English East India Company officials is depicted in perfect detail, as are the Maharana's courtiers, who are politely, and diplomatically, seated opposite them, also in European chairs. But the Maharana still bears the unassailable mark of an anointed king – a large halo.[5]

There are other signs of royalty in these regional paintings, which were clear to those who knew how to read them. Elephants have long been associated with Indian rulers, particularly those ruling over Hindu kingdoms. Panoramic paintings show the monarch either seated on a decorated elephant, or with elephants in his retinue, as for example in the "processional" paintings from Tanjore (Thanjavur) and Hyderabad. The *chhattar,* or ceremonial umbrella, is held over the monarch's head to shelter him from the sun, while the *morchhal,* a fan of peacock feathers, is gently waved. The *chauri,* the flywhisk, was also a symbol of royalty, and personable young attendants holding the whisks were never far away from the monarch. Special symbols associated with particular royal dynasties were employed to remind the viewers of the origins of rulers. In Mewar the *surya,* the anthropomorphized face of the sun, appears on banners held by the maharana's attendants and it appears too on the painted trunks of the royal elephants. In Awadh the ubiquitous pair of fish, derived from the *maha maratib,* a Mughal honour presented to an early nawab by the emperor is found on *nishan*s, the round metal discs carried on poles in ceremonial processions.

Because virtually all princely portraits were commissioned either by the rulers themselves, or by people wishing to flatter their masters, we can be sure that the images we see are the images that the rulers wanted us to see. They are noble figures, seated on the throne, surrounded by royal relatives, distinguished visitors, and courtiers. They lead processions, riding through the countryside into battle, or to hunt animals in lush greenery. There are portraits that establish the ruler's dynastic credentials by showing his ancestors too. Increasingly, as we move into the late 18th century, the ruler is shown receiving groups of Englishmen from the East India Company. The ruler is never shown as less than royal. There is no hint of lèse-majesté, a term that would not have been understood in India. If a ruler was found wanting, or there was sufficient pressure to remove him for family or political reasons, he was deposed, and usually killed. But he was not mocked or insulted while he maintained the throne and his authority. The art of caricature, which flourished in 18th-century England, is absolutely unknown in pictures of Indian rulers during the same period. Nawab Asaf-ud-daula of Awadh would have been a natural figure for the cartoonist's pen, being grossly overweight, even as a young man, and toothless too. But we know him, from numerous portraits, only as a plump, but dignified man. There was no restraint among writers, from the satirist poet Sauda, to numerous English writers, in describing some rulers as figures of fun, but this was never translated into the visual medium. Not until the early 20th century do we get a cartoon of any Indian prince, and when it happens, as in the cartoon of Ranjitsinhji of Nawanagar, by "Spy", it is a flattering picture of this modest, but brilliant cricketer.

Political events impacted dramatically on royal portraiture. There were hundreds of states within the Indian subcontinent, each with its own ruler and his ministers, with its own laws, its own currency, and its own local traditions and customs. Most had indigenous schools of painting too, whose skilled artists delighted in figurative work, including portraits of royalty (figure 1). By the 1750s patronage of artists by the Mughal emperors was in decline. There were to be no more glorious volumes like the *Padshahnama* of Shah Jahan's reign. Emperor Aurangzeb, who died in 1707, had been unwilling to support court artists, and with the weakening of the central authority these artists had to seek patronage elsewhere. Many went to provincial courts, whose rulers were freeing themselves from all but nominal links with the failing Mughals. The arrival of artists bringing different skills and

techniques with them led to vigorous new schools of painting, that acknowledged existing indigenous tradition but added Mughal flair and craftsmanship (figure 2). Even smaller centres like Shorapur, Kurnool, Poona, and Ahmedabad benefited from the dispersal of talent, and in western India there was a fruitful commingling with established Rajput schools.[6]

At the same time, the Honourable East India Company, which had begun as a trading company operating between India, China, and England, was growing in strength and influence. The Company was based initially in three ports, Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta, but was making inroads into the Indian interior, after Lord Robert Clive, the Governor of Bengal, acquired the *diwani* (superintendence of revenue) for that province in 1765. The East India Company was punctilious in observing the visible rituals associated with kingship in the states, many of which seemed to be slipping inexorably into the Company's grasp. By the end of the 18th century, Residents and Political Agents were posted in major cities, where they fostered the Company's aims with a polished politeness, presenting the ritual *nazr* (token gift) to the ruler in the durbar, participating in the major festivals, and in return, welcoming the rulers to Christmas parties in the Residencies and Agencies. Gift-giving, once the prerogative of the king, became confused as European visitors, some official and some unofficial, offered toys and artefacts from the West to the rulers. Some of the rulers tried to regain the initiative by awarding impressive Persian titles to Company officials, particularly to European mercenaries who were training their soldiers in new fighting methods. Others awarded *jagir*s (revenue lands) to Europeans, who dreamt of retiring to Europe once they had made their fortunes. There was a profound lack of understanding of the role of an Indian monarch among Europeans and Company officials. The delicate, often invisible chains that bound the kingdom and society together, emanating from the king, could not be appreciated by foreign traders and soldiers. Only the outward ritual, which could be observed, was upheld. Nicholas Dirks, in his study of an Indian kingdom entitled *The Hollow Crown,* found that colonialism preserved the forms of the old regime, "But these forms were frozen and only the appearance of the old regime – without its virtually connected political and social processes – was saved."[7]

In the wake of the Company officials came the artists. Four years after Clive got the *diwani* of Bengal, thus establishing a substantial footing in northern India, the first professional English artist arrived – a man whose paintings were to change the face of portraiture irrevocably. His name was Tilly Kettle (1735–86) and he won commissions to paint Muhammad Ali Khan, the Nawab of Arcot. As Charles Greig shows in the first chapter of this book, Kettle's work was a revelation. Nothing could have been more different from the hitherto known portraits of royalty. All the norms of portraying the rulers were overthrown in a succession of extraordinarily realistic paintings that flowed from Kettle's brush. Instead of the profile appearance of Mughal painting, where the sitter's gaze is oblique, Kettle's subjects are shown full-face, gazing at the viewer. The mystique of royalty, the physical space that distanced them from the public, has been banished, the halos have gone, and the rulers are now seen to be living people, standing before the viewer in intimate engagement.

What might have been lost in translating the princely appearance is more than compensated for by the sheer size of European canvases. For almost the first time rulers could see themselves as in a full-length looking-glass, life-size, or even larger. The trappings of royalty changed dramatically too. European artists used different props to lend majesty to their subjects. The delicate garden scenes, and troops of beautiful women, beloved of Mughal painters, were gone. In their place came rich velvet drapes, bunched up as backdrops, marble columns or arches, and tiled floors drawn with a vanishing perspective. Impressive though this new style of portraiture was, it did have the disadvantage of removing the princes from their context, so that we now no longer see them surrounded by their courtiers, their soldiers, their women, and their hunting processions. The techniques of European painting were as different as the styles. Oil-based paints were used instead of the earth and mineral colours of Indian miniaturists. Gold leaf does not seem to have been exploited at all by the new painters. Kettle was a master of impasto, the trick of building up the canvas surface with thick applications of paint, sometimes using aggregate, so that a jewelled armband stands proud of the painting and appears to shimmer as the light catches its facets.

Nawab Shuja-ud-daula of Awadh, whose capital was then at

3. Zeenat Mahal, the favourite wife of Bahadur Shah Zafar, the king of Delhi. By a Delhi artist, c. 1857. Collection of Pran Nevile, Gurgaon.

Faizabad, invited Kettle to paint him and his sons, and the artist moved north, paving the way for an influx of European painters who participated in the golden age of Company painting, roughly from 1770 to the end of the century, a period of some thirty years. The work of men like Zoffany, Devis, the Daniells, Ozias Humphry and others may seem to receive a disproportionate amount of emphasis in discussion, but it was their work that was to influence the painted image in India in the future. Court artists continued to work where they found patronage, but they could not remain unaffected by the new ideas, even if they still produced traditional paintings themselves (figure 3). It became fashionable for rulers to employ European artists, and rich men like the nawabs of Awadh had a succession of such men, including Robert Home, who designed furniture, robes, and crowns for his master. The second chapter considers some previously unknown images of the Nawabs which may be based on European originals from the court artists.

European paintings were so popular that a huge amount of copying went on. Sometimes this was done by the artist himself, reworking a successful picture. Zoffany produced two versions of "Colonel Mordaunt's Cock-Match", one of the best loved Company paintings and one which, uncharacteristically, shows Nawab Asaf-ud-daula at the centre of a lively group of people. Indian artists worked as copyists, and judging by the number of paintings that exist today, there must have been whole *karkhana*s (workshops) of men engaged in this profession. Miniature paintings in the European style were popular gifts, framed in jewels, that could be worn on a sash or as a pendant. Large numbers of copies of these were produced. Other works were copied to furnish picture galleries in palaces, and the ruler of Tanjore had a number of portraits, including those of Napoleon Bonaparte and the Marquess of Hastings, hanging on his walls. Some of the copied works were of poor quality, as I have shown in my chapter on the Hyderabad portraits, but the fact that they were made at all is in itself of interest. Mihr Chand copied Tilly Kettle's work in oils, and sometimes it is only the copies that exist today, because the original has been lost. But European artists seemed to have picked up almost nothing from the court ateliers. The trade in techniques and styles seems to have been entirely one-way. Indian textiles imported into Britain and Europe were eagerly snapped up and created a craze for "chinoiserie" (the term embraces all oriental artefacts), but paintings by Indian artists, although admired and collected, did not influence European artists.

Paintings and sculptures from the south Indian court of Tanjore form an important bridge between vernacular art and the European style, under the patronage of Serfoji II (1798–1832). As Indira Peterson shows, the Maratha ruler was unusual in that he was given an English education and this influenced the development of the visual arts during his reign. His polymathic character led him to champion both traditional portraiture, albeit acknowledging some European conventions, and two pieces from one of the foremost English sculptors of his day, John Flaxman. It is difficult not to be moved by Flaxman's marble memorial for

the Reverend Schwartz, showing Serfoji ministering to the dying missionary.

By the mid-19th century another revolution had taken place in portraiture, with the arrival of the camera. It was immediately taken up in India with great enthusiasm, and skilled photographers soon emerged, including two court photographers, Lala Deen Dayal in Hyderabad and Ahmad Ali Khan in Lucknow. It was not the end of portrait painting, as several art historians have stated categorically, but it was a useful new tool, which employed similar European stylistic references and props in the painted images. As Usha Bala Krishnan remarks, it was only when royalty began to be photographed in all its splendour that we can truly appreciate the extraordinarily rich jewels of the ruling houses. Princes purchased their jewels from Cartier, whose photographic archives are now the only place where some of the necklaces can be seen. Many were broken up, including the famous Patiala bib of diamonds, which existed for a mere 20 years, between its commissioning in 1928 and its disappearance after 1947. The platinum chains, stripped of their diamonds, were purchased by Cartier about 1998. The necklace, partially recreated, is currently on display at Cartier's private museum in Geneva.

But behind the surface glitter, as Amin Jaffer relates in his chapter, there was a sense that real power was passing from the rulers. As a result of the Great Uprising or Revolt which swept across northern India in 1857 and 1858, the territories that had been held by the East India Company passed to the British Crown and the Company was abolished. The term "Princely State" was now used to signify states with various degrees of autonomy which were ruled by a princely house, usually of long standing. The many titles used by the ruling families, like Rana, Maharana, Maharao, Thakur, and among Muslims, Nawab and Nizam, were all translated by the British as "Prince" thereby avoiding the implication that native rulers might have an equivalent, or even higher status, than the reigning British monarch. Although the rulers continued to be addressed individually by their titles, the idea of the princely states was ultimately to "harmonize" the idea of kingship, to make it understandable in Western terms, and to strip away the concept of power, authority, statecraft, and ritual embodied in a single figure. In exchange for real power, these men and a few women were now loaded with honorific symbols, British-devised coats of arms, various orders of merit bestowed in elaborate investiture ceremonies, and invitations to British royal durbars. The confusion in dress, apparent in some photographic portraits of the rulers, reflects the dichotomy of men who were given an English education but not allowed to wear English dress to the durbars, because it did not look "exotic" enough. Queen Victoria, who was given the title Empress of India in 1877, to her great credit took her awesome role seriously and maintained a genuine interest in her subjects, employing Indian servants at her court, adopting various Indian princes and princesses, and commissioning artists to travel to India and to paint what they saw there. Photographic albums of landscapes, people, and princes were presented to the Queen and form part of the Royal Collection today.[8]

Just as European painters had changed the way in which the monarch was presented to the viewers, and thus the people, so photography produced another, radical, change. This was not so much to do with capturing an immediate image, but with changing the whole context in which the rulers had formerly been pictured. Durbar scenes in which the ruler had been instantly identifiable, because the painter had made him so, looked confused and messy in photographs, because (unlike today) extraneous figures could not be edited out. There was too much ornamentation, too many chandeliers, too much heavy mid-19th-century furniture, that diminished the royal figure to the status of an ordinary man. Photographs showed only too plainly that in some cases the ruler was in fact considerably smaller in size than his ministers. The Raja of Pudukkottai, illustrated in Sophie Gordon's chapter, shows a diminutive, almost dwarf-like figure, perched on the edge of a large chair, surrounded by men of more substance. Coincidentally, the state of Pudukkottai provided the field study for the ethnohistorian, Nicholas Dirks, although he does not refer to this photograph. Photographs of royal processions, another favourite topic for the artist, were equally unsuccessful. Lala Deen Dayal tried to capture the elephant procession crossing the Afzul-Gunj Bridge at Hyderabad in January 1893.[9] The occasion was the visit of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria to the Nizam, Mahbub Ali Khan. The relative status of both rulers would have been made clear in a conventional Deccani painting, but Deen Dayal's photograph showed a confused and hazy scene.

The photographer had to stand on an archway, high above the procession, in order to get a picture, which meant he was literally looking down on the Nizam and the Archduke. The elephants' tread sent up a cloud of dust, so those immediately behind the royal elephant were obscured. Some of the marching attendants had not been able to stand still, so they are out of focus, and the horses' legs, also unfocused, are foreshortened by the angle of the camera.

Photographs of rulers standing or sitting alone, with the prop of a bunched curtain, a carved table, chair, and footstool, became popular. The ruler dressed as elaborately as possible, because every detail of costume and jewels would show to advantage in a studio portrait. Some of the princes became photographers too, which gave them a professional view of how to present themselves to the camera, as Sophie Gordon shows. The process of customizing royal photographs by over-painting them, sometimes even adding a halo of gold leaf around the ruler's head is a poignant attempt to reverse that which had become irreversible.

As the erstwhile rulers moved further away from their glorious past, and into the colonial period, it seemed more important than ever to establish their credentials. Series of "family lineage" portraits appear, like those of the Jaipur maharajas, described by Vibhuti Sachdev and Giles Tillotson. These of course had to be painted, and some of the earliest rulers, like the 11th-century Kakilji, were entirely the product of the artist's imagination, in this case the Indo-German painter A.H. Müller.

By the 20th century, as Barbara Ramusack concludes in the final chapter, the rulers had attempted, by and large, to reinvent themselves. During the First World War and after, the princes, as "imperial allies", attended war and peace conferences in Europe, and the establishment of the Chamber of Princes in 1921 in Delhi brought together, for the first time, some of the men whose forefathers had ruled princely India. With convenient travel to Britain now possible, princes and maharajas came as tourists and sportsmen, rather than as the petitioners they had been a century earlier. Their exotic clothes and priceless jewels inspired, in particular, the fashion for long strings of pearls which adorned the necks of 1920s "flappers", and the semi-barbaric "slave bracelets" worn above the elbow, in imitation of the armbands or *bajubands*. They had travelled a long way, not only geographically, but far away too from their origins as the rulers of independent states, or the Mughal provinces of India. This book traces, through the painted image and the photograph, their long journey.

Notes

1. Because this book covers portraits from the early 18th century to 1947, place names are given in the colonial British form in which they were commonly used. Thus Bombay (now Mumbai), Madras (now Chennai), Calcutta (now Kolkata), etc.

2. Norbert Peabody, *Hindu Kingship – Polity in Pre-colonial India*, Cambridge, CUP, 2003, p. 5.

3. Nicholas Dirks, *The Hollow Crown – Ethnohistory of an Indian Kingdom*, Cambridge, CUP, 1987, p. 130.

4. Milo Cleveland Beach and Ebba Koch, *King of the World: The Padshahnama*, London, Azimuth Editions, 1997. See for example p. 53, plate 17 "Shah Jehan receives the Persian Ambassador Muhammad Ali Beg", c. 1633.

5. Joachim Bautze, *Interaction of Cultures: Indian and Western Painting 1780–1910. The Ehrenfeld Collection*, Alexandria, Virginia, Art Services International, 1998, pp. 158–59.

6. Stella Kramrisch, *A Survey of Painting in the Deccan*, Calcutta, The India Society, 1937, p. 183.

7. Dirks, op. cit., p. 6.

8. Saloni Mathur, *Swoboda: An Indian Encounter: Portraits for Queen Victoria*, London, National Gallery, 2002. See for example the photographic album sent to Queen Victoria in 1887 which contained portraits of Indian rulers from all over the country. The Royal Collection, Windsor, RCIN 2107578 to 2107701.

9. Bautze, op. cit., pp. 138–39.

Artists from Afar

Company Painters in the Princely Courts of India 1770–1900

CHARLES GREIG

Up until 1770 few European artists had ventured beyond the confines of their own continent. Frans Post, a Dutch landscape artist, had travelled to Brazil in the closing years of the 17th century and painted poetic scenes of the Portuguese settlements around the coast. But a visual concept of India and its people was largely unknown to the European public until the arrival of numerous painters in the subcontinent in the last 30 years of the 18th century.

The reasons for this sudden change are various. India's legendary riches had long attracted adventurers and traders. But after 1757, a series of wars and diplomatic manoeuvres saw the rapid expansion of the East India Company's power coupled with the arrival of numerous European administrators with significant amounts of surplus cash to pay for luxuries, including portraits. In England, competition amongst artists for patrons was stiff and many talented painters decided to seek their fortunes in India instead. The brief period from 1770 to 1800 saw a remarkable flowering of friendships between Indians and Europeans before the attitudinal and policy shifts towards racial separation made intimacy between them difficult. Many of the paintings that survive from this period echo this close relationship between the colonizing and colonized elite and it can be seen as the halcyon days of Anglo-Indian art.

1. Fragment of a large painting by Tilly Kettle, early 1770s, showing two sons (Umdat Al-Umara and Amir Al-Umara) of the Nawab of Arcot, Muhammad Ali. Oil on canvas. Christie's Images Ltd 2000.

The Portraits of Tilly Kettle

Tilly Kettle (1735–86) was the first professional portrait painter to go to India from Europe and it was his success in securing commissions from princely rulers that laid the foundation for his followers. Disappointed at having been omitted from the newly formed Royal Academy in London, Kettle decided to try his luck in India. He arrived in Madras in June 1769. Initially he received commissions from Company servants and military officers in Fort St George, but he quickly realized that much larger fees could be extracted from the Nawab of Arcot, Muhammad Ali. Kettle secured a number of commissions for portraits of the prince and his family. Many of these survive, including the fine portrait of the Nawab, standing on a terrace with palm trees beyond (Victoria and Albert Museum, London). He is shown richly dressed in a brocade coat and wearing magnificent pearl necklaces. Recently a superb fragment of a large painting, long thought to have been destroyed, came to light.[1] It shows two of the Nawab's sons – Umdat Al-Umara and his brother Amir Al-Umara, each dressed in sumptuous silk embroidered clothes and wearing magnificent jewels (figure 1). It originally formed part of a monumental painting of Muhammad Ali and his five sons that was commissioned by the Nawab for presentation to the English Governor, Charles Bourchier. Even in its fragmentary form it remains a powerful example of Kettle's capacity to convey the idiosyncrasies of his sitters' faces and personalities. Whether other fragments survive is uncertain. A portrait of the youthful Tipu Sultan (Seringapatam Fort Museum) and three portraits of the Nawab's sons (Fort St George Museum, Chennai) have been incorrectly attributed to other artists but they are each painted in the same polished and elegant style as the Nawab's portrait and can now be given firmly to Kettle.

Two years later, Kettle moved to Calcutta and soon after was summoned by Shuja-ud-daula to Faizabad. Although nominally subject to the Mughal emperor in Delhi, Shuja-ud-daula wielded immense power over Awadh (Oudh), the richest province in India at the time. By 1771 Faizabad was beginning to usurp Delhi in both size and prosperity. No written record of Kettle's year in this city survives but the seven extant portraits of Shuja-ud-daula and his family[2] reveal much and they represent the high point of Kettle's career. They are painted in much the same style as the Madras portraits, with great attention paid to the texture of the clothes and costly jewels. Those of Shuja-ud-daula himself reveal his singular and resolute character – suggesting a rather close relationship between the artist and patron. Perhaps as important was their lasting influence on the Mughal court painters in Faizabad who produced numerous copies and versions in gouache of Kettle's work.

After Kettle's return to London in 1776, he was followed, in quick succession, by a number of portrait painters of varying ability. George Willison (1745–97), a Scottish painter, produced a number of portraits of the Nawab of Arcot that are little more than pale imitations of Kettle's work. George Farington (1752–88), the brother of the famous diarist[3] worked in Murshidabad for the Nawab Mubarak-ud-daula, but all his work done for his patron and similar subjects done for the British Resident, Sir John Hadley D'Oyly, are lost to studies. On the evidence of copies done by Indian artists, his paintings appear to have been highly original images that would have given us an intimate vision of court life in Murshidabad at the time.

Johann Zoffany, Arthur William Devis, and Thomas Hickey

Arguably the most important European painter to visit India, Johann Zoffany (1733–1810) arrived in Madras in August 1783 and Calcutta six weeks later. He had already established his reputation as a painter of the first rank in the courts of Europe. Yet of all painters of the period he is probably the least understood. Surprisingly little of his recorded Indian work has been studied – perhaps 30 per cent – and numerous works continue to be incorrectly attributed to him on scant evidence. In Calcutta he quickly received numerous commissions. Yet, like Tilly Kettle and William Hodges before him, the attraction of Awadh proved irresistible. His first of three visits to Lucknow coincided with that of his principal patron, the Governor General Warren Hastings. Only a handful of paintings and drawings related to these visits seem to have survived. Of these only five paintings and one drawing fall within the scope of this essay.

Immediately on arrival in Lucknow in June 1784, Hastings commissioned Zoffany to paint a portrait of Prince Jawan Bakht, the eldest son of Emperor Shah Alam, who had arrived in the

city from Delhi a month earlier (figure 2). This portrait, and another version done for Major General Claude Martin, were long thought to be lost, but the Hastings version has now resurfaced[4] and is certainly amongst the finest single portraits by the artist to survive. It shows the young Prince seated against bolsters, his hands grasping the hilt of a sword. The artist's understanding of the sitter's character – his charm, decency, and above all his vulnerability – are revealed with consummate skill. It is as if the artist could have seen something of the Prince's tragic future and early death. A rare oil sketch (Victoria Memorial, Kolkata) shows the Prince seated on a moonlit terrace. Accompanied by Asaf-ud-daula and Warren Hastings, he is surrounded by numerous courtiers and British officials. The composition admirably displays the ease with which Indians and Europeans met on the friendliest of terms at the time – something that is almost unimaginable within a few years. Shuja-ud-daula had been succeeded as nawab in 1775 by his son Asaf-ud-daula. Greatly and unfairly maligned by European historians, this clever and wily man was responsible for the rebuilding of Lucknow. He was a formidable patron of the arts. Two single portraits of him by Zoffany survive[5] together with Hastings' significant commission "Colonel Mordaunt's Cock-Match" (Tate Gallery, London). This masterpiece, remarkable for the ease with which Zoffany combined so many disparate elements, his grand vision and versatility is the key visual record of the diverse aspects of Indian and European social life in Lucknow in the 1780s. Zoffany's Indian paintings reveal just how far he had travelled as an artist – from the severe clarity of his court paintings done in London into an almost mystical world where the soul of the sitter was all-important.

2. "Prince Jawan Bakht" by Johann Zoffany, 1784. Oil on canvas. Private collection.

Five months after Zoffany's departure from Calcutta in 1784, Arthur William Devis (1762–1822) arrived in the city on his return from China to England.[6] He stayed in India for 11 years. Most of his work falls outside the compass of this essay – his superb series of paintings entitled *Arts and Manufactures of Bengal* represent his most enduring and original contribution to British Indian art. But one painting that has aroused more controversy than almost any other from this period, "The Palmer Family" conversation piece, is included here on account of Begam Faiz Baksh's royal connection.[7] At the time that it was acquired by the India Office Library in 1925, it was attributed, by family tradition, to Zoffany, but this was rejected at the time of the Zoffany exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery, London (January to March 1977) and it was then given to the Italian painter Francesco Renaldi who arrived in Calcutta in August 1786. Later, in the exhibition *Encounters – The Meeting of Asia and Europe 1500–1800* at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (September to December 2004) the attribution reverted to Zoffany. Both these attributions are untenable. Renaldi can be dismissed both on stylistic grounds and in that his arrival in India was clearly later than the date of the scene. Zoffany's style differs significantly from that of the only other contender, Devis. Zoffany's figures are characterized by a muscular energy combined with a certain formality and detachment. In his conversation pieces

3. Unfinished portrait of William Palmer's family, attributed to Arthur William Devis, 1785. Oil on canvas. The British Library, London, Acc. No. Foster 597.

each figure is minutely and precisely delineated. He excelled in the rendering of the texture of cloth and his palette is highly individual. Devis, on the other hand, invested his figures with a serenity and languorous elegance that is far removed from the animated gestures found in most of Zoffany's figures. The faces of Devis's figures are carefully individualized, often contrasting with loosely painted backgrounds. "The Palmer Family" conversation piece is perhaps the most delightful visual evocation of an Anglo-Indian family that exists (figure 3). William Palmer[8] is seen seated looking adoringly at his Muslim wife, Begam Faiz Baksh of the royal house of Delhi, and they are flanked by other members of her family and ayahs. Their two eldest children, William and Mary stand close by and baby Hastings lies in his mother's lap. The occasion was probably just after Hastings' baptism in Calcutta in December 1785 soon after the Palmers' return there from Lucknow. The painting seems to have none of the usual characteristics that we associate with Zoffany. The relaxed elegance of the figures, the sensitivity with which they have each been painted, the intimacy of the scene, the

subdued palette, and the poses of the subsidiary figures are all characteristic of Devis. Zoffany was in Lucknow in December 1785. Apart from Thomas Hickey (1741–1824), who was incapable of a conversation piece of this sophistication, Devis was the only other eminent painter in Calcutta at the time. He alone had the talent and abilities to paint such a majestic work. For the first time it can be given with certainty to Devis – himself perhaps the most underrated of all the painters of British India.

Hickey's strength lay in his deft execution of faces and in his ability to capture the subtleties of the character of his sitters. His arrival in Madras from Europe late in 1798 coincided with the preparations for the Fourth Mysore War culminating in the defeat and death of Tipu Sultan at Seringapatam in May 1799. For the next two years Hickey made a series of at least 55 chalk drawings,

4. "Abdal Khaliq", second son of Tipu Sultan, by Thomas Hickey, c. 1800. Oil on canvas. Victoria Memorial, Kolkata.

some done in Madras, others in Seringapatam and yet others in Vellore and Mysore. They included both British officers involved in the campaign and various Indian sitters. The latter included sons of Tipu Sultan (figure 4), various vakils connected with Tipu's court, and a portrait of the young Krishnaraja Wadiyar III, who was installed on the throne of Mysore by the British. They are each brilliantly delineated. Hickey went on to work up 16 of these into oils for the Governor General's house (now Raj Bhavan) in Calcutta.[9]

Painters at the Indian Courts

Robert Home's (1752–1834) long career in India spanned the turn of the 18th–19th centuries. His work has so often been confused with Zoffany's – in itself a testament to his ability – that it has been difficult to judge his true merit and contribution to British Indian art. His most enduring legacy is the work done as court painter to Ghazi-ud-din Haider of Awadh between 1814 and 1827. A fine portrait shows the King of Awadh receiving tribute (Collection of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, on loan to Victoria Memorial, Calcutta). It plunges the viewer into the solemn yet regal world of Lucknow in 1820. Home is renowned not only for painting court pictures. He also designed his patron's crown and regalia, his carriages, boats, and other equipment, almost none of which survives. His album (Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum) provides an invaluable insight into the work he was engaged in.

The decline of Mughal power in India in the 18th century was mirrored not only by the expansion of the East India Company's domains across the subcontinent but also by the extraordinary military successes of the Marathas. Their real authority lay in the hands of the Maratha chiefs – the most powerful of which, by the end of the 18th century, was Mahadaji Scindia. But these chiefs were, theoretically at least, subject to the authority of the Peshwa in Poona. James Wales (1747–95), another Scottish painter, arrived in Bombay in 1791 where, soon after, he met the British Resident at Poona, Sir Charles Warre Malet. Malet, impressed with Wales's obvious ability as a painter, invited the artist to Poona and introduced him to the young Peshwa Madhu Rao Narayan and his brilliant minister Nana Fadnavis. Numerous commissions resulted and also paintings of "ladies, cheetahs, elephants and horses". Sadly, little of this work has survived. A fine portrait of the Peshwa and his minister is in the Royal Asiatic Society in London (figure 5). The Peshwa is shown seated on his *gaddi* or throne of velvet and brocade in the Shaniwarwada Palace durbar hall. He wears simple court dress but his turban is adorned with a fine jewelled *sarpech*. Another much damaged version of this painting survives in Government House (now Raj Bhavan, Ganeshkhind, Poona) and six other single portraits of the Peshwa and various ministers[10] account for all Wales's work of the court at Poona that is known to studies.

5. "The Peshwa Madhu Rao Narayan with Nana Fadnavis", by James Wales, c. 1791. Oil on canvas. Royal Asiatic Society, London.

Lesser Known Artists of the 19th Century

In sharp contrast to the period 1770 to 1800, the 19th century saw comparatively few painters of the first rank travelling to India from Europe. Two exceptions, George Chinnery and Edward Lear, each spent extended periods in India but appear to have ignored princely commissions. For all that, a number of interesting portrait painters worked in the subcontinent sometimes for long

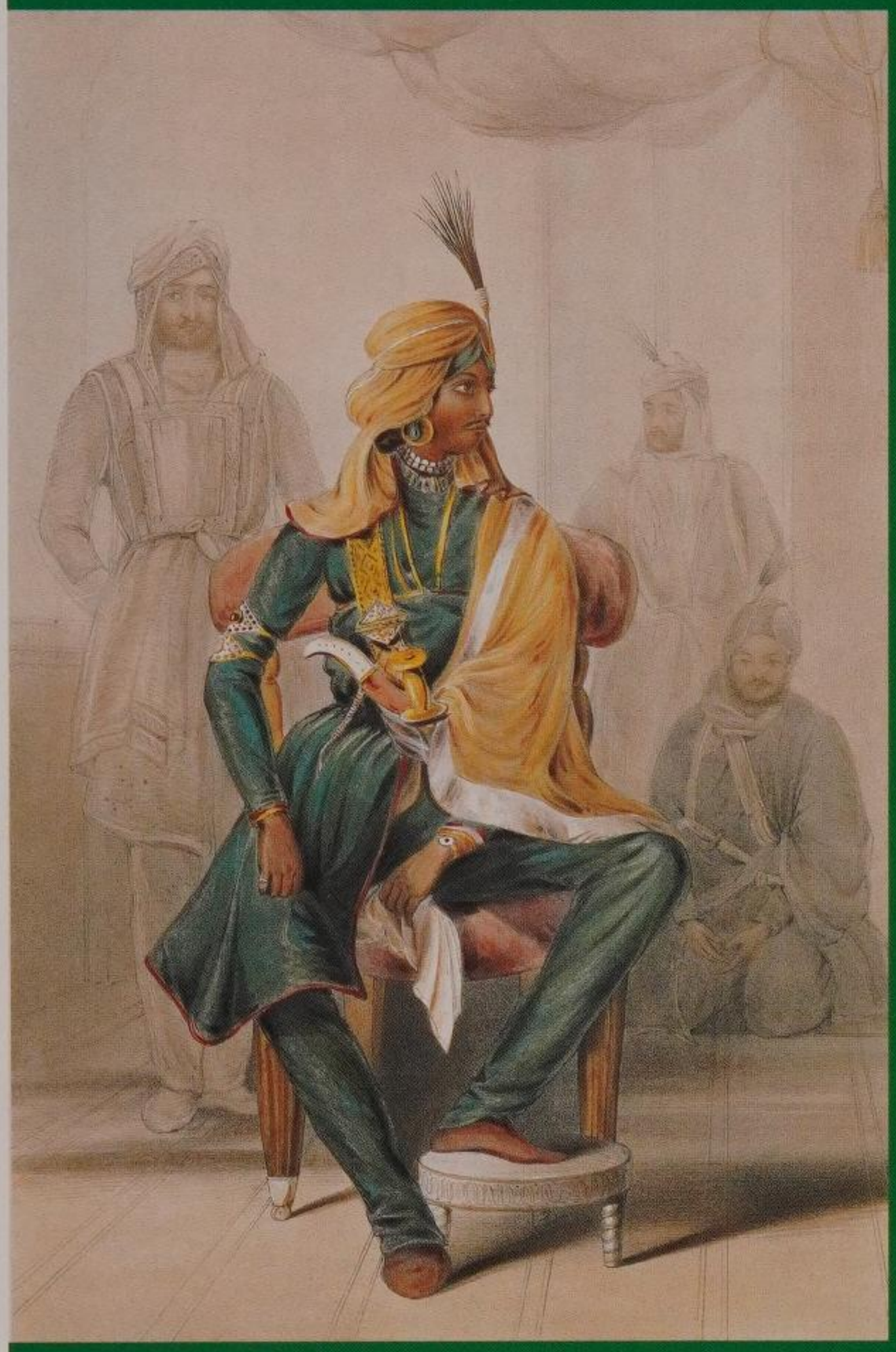
periods. William Henry Florio Hutchisson (1773–1857) arrived in Calcutta in the autumn of 1824, just before the departure of Chinnery for China, and he stayed in India for 18 years. A few paintings by Hutchisson survive. In 1836 he visited Murshidabad and painted several portraits of the Nawab Nazim Humayun Jah (figure 6). One was sent as a gift by the Nawab to William IV and it in turn was presented in 1930 to Viceregal Lodge (now Rashtrapati Bhavan), New Delhi, where it still hangs. Five other portraits of the Nawab survive in the palace of Murshidabad. They are each surprisingly sensitive portrayals of a vulnerable

6. "Nawab Nazim Humayun Jah", by William Hutchisson, 1836. Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi.

prince, whose family had been stripped of wealth and power by the British. His paintings confirm that Hutchisson was fully at ease in the Indian environment.

In Europe in the 19th century, the art world was split between sharply opposing factions. The traditionalists took their inspiration from the past and sought an ever greater realism in their painting, through meticulous detail. In stark contrast, the revolutionary modernizers were preoccupied with the delineation of light. They overturned many of the long held principles and techniques of painting, like chiaroscuro, and the great art movement of Impressionism was born. Benjamin Hudson (1823–91) arrived in Calcutta in 1854 and remained in the city for about eight years. A significant number of his portraits survive and show that he was clearly a traditionalist. His portraits of the Maharaja of Burdwan and his family and others of the Sinha family of Paikpara and the Nawab of Murshidabad are each painted in the same precise, almost miniaturist style. Although his technique was faultless, his painting reveals little that was beneath the visible eye. One longs to know more about the elegantly dressed figures, but this was beyond Hudson's powers or perhaps he was just not sufficiently interested!

With the eclipse of the great Maratha princes in the early 19th century and their assimilation into an India dominated by the British, the Sikhs alone remained a potent power in northern India for another quarter century. Emily Eden (1797–1869), the sister of the Governor General, Lord Auckland, is perhaps best known for her written and visual accounts of the court of Ranjit Singh. She undertook a long and arduous journey upcountry with her brother, visiting the Punjab in the winter of 1838, just a few months before Ranjit's death. She made numerous drawings of the Maharaja and members of his court (figure 7). Most of these survive among the 193 drawings by her in the Victoria Memorial, Kolkata. While they provide an invaluable record of the court at that period, their artistic importance falls far short of her reputation. These surviving watercolours are very much amateur works. Back in London, Emily Eden was fortunate to find a brilliant lithographer, J. Dickinson, to work up and greatly improve on her sketches for the magnificent publication *Portraits of the Princes and People of India,* in 1844. In the same year that Emily Eden arrived in Lahore an enterprising Hungarian painter



7. "Raja Heera Singh", by Emily Eden. Lithograph by J. Dickinson, 1844. Private collection.

August Theodor Schoeft (1809–88) arrived in India at the age of 29. A year later he completed full-length portraits of the Nawab of Arcot, Ghulam Muhammad Ghaus, and of his uncle, Prince Azim Jah. After a brief stay in Calcutta, he announced his intention of travelling to the Punjab. He paused in Delhi to paint the last Mughal Emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar and two of his sons, Mirza Mughal and Mirza Jawan Bakht. Schoeft arrived in Lahore probably in May or June 1841 and was immediately summoned by the new Maharaja, Sher Singh, who was then at Amritsar. The ruler was so impressed with Schoeft's ability that he and several of the principal members of the court sat for him. Many of these paintings done on the spot seem to be lost, but

Schoeft took back with him to Europe his brilliant drawings and ten years later in Vienna worked these up into the fully finished paintings that are now in the Princess Bamba Collection, Lahore Fort. They include his historical tour de force "The Court of Lahore", for which Schoeft relied not just on his drawings but also on his memory and a significant degree of improvisation. Many of the characters included in the composition had already died when Schoeft arrived in Lahore – Ranjit Singh in June 1839; Maharaja Kharak Singh and his son Nau Nihal Singh within a day of each other in November 1840. By the time this grand composition was completed the Punjab had been annexed by the British and other characters in the picture had also died, many in tragic circumstances. In the same collection are other paintings by Schoeft – testimony to his extraordinary ability and imagination. These include "Maharaja Ranjit Singh Listening to the Granth Being Recited near the Golden Temple, Amritsar" and a majestic portrait of "Maharaja Sher Singh Seated on the Golden Throne of Maharaja Ranjit Singh" (figure 8). The last of the Lahore maharajas, and perhaps the most tragic, Maharaja Dalip Singh, travelled to England in 1854, where Queen Victoria elevated him to the rank of a European prince. Almost immediately the Queen arranged for the young Maharaja to sit for her favourite painter, Franz Winterhalter (1805–93). The result (Collection of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II) is probably the most celebrated portrait of an Indian prince. Dressed in a splendid silk costume and wearing magnificent jewels, the young man seems to be living up to the exalted status accorded to him by the Queen. But it singularly failed – perhaps intentionally on this clever artist's part – to reveal the Maharaja's real vulnerability or even to glimpse at his long and sad decline.

Post-1857 Painters

Despite the perceived horrors of the events of 1857 in India, Queen Victoria maintained an interest in the Indian scene that was only second to her interest in the Highlands of Scotland. She sent out to her new "Empire" a number of artists to record for her and for posterity the princes of this far-off place. First of these was Sir Edwin Landseer's 20-year old nephew, George Landseer (1834–78). He spent eight years in India and sent back both landscapes and portraits of some of the princes. His full-length portrait of the Maharaja Tukoji II of Indore (private collection) reveals an artist entirely familiar with the developments of those artists opposed to the rigid formulae of classical painting (figure 9). The freedom of the young Landseer's brush, his vibrant colours, and above all his search for his sitter's inner temperament mark him as one of the most capable yet underrated of Victorian painters.

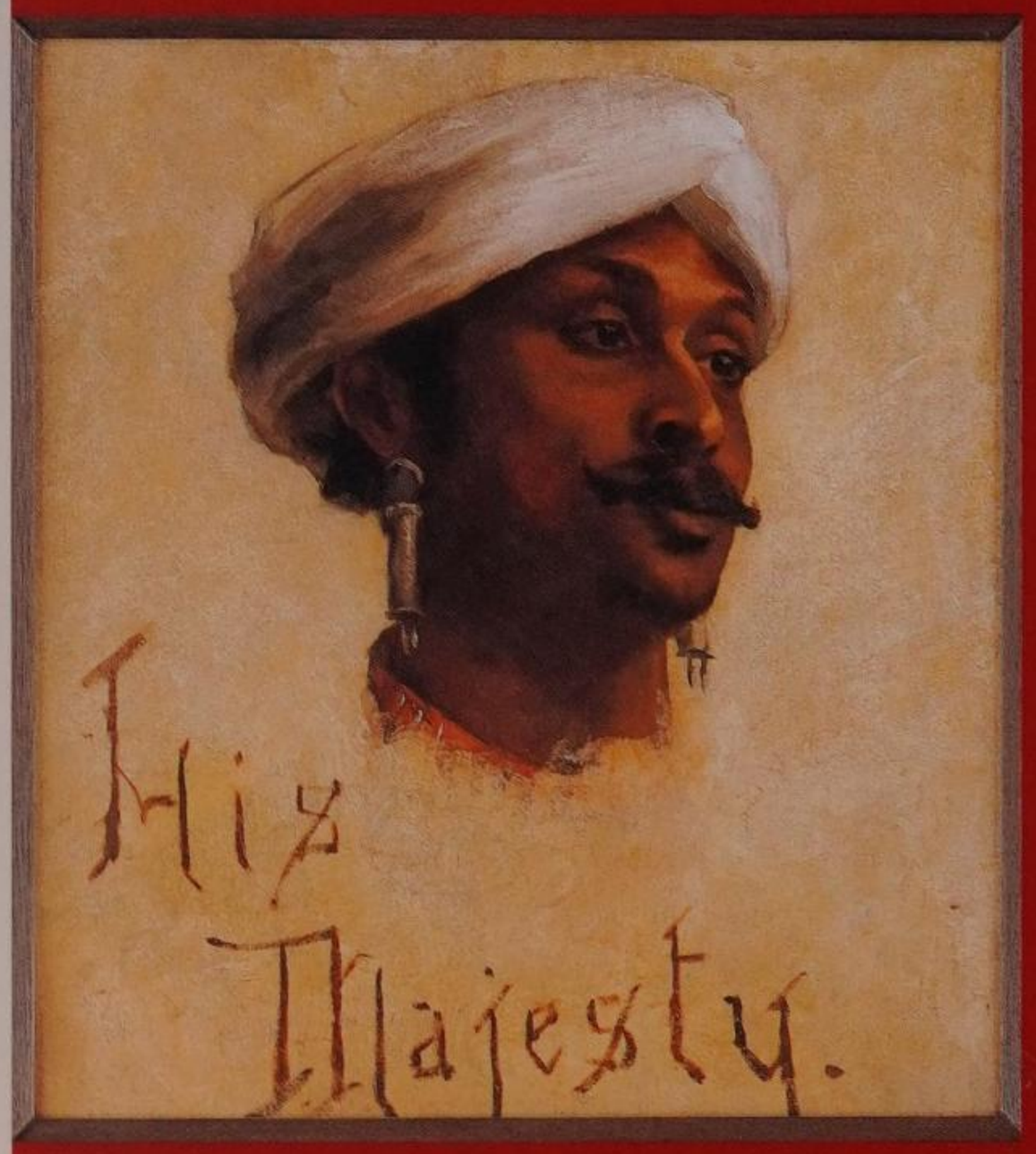
In the cold weather of 1875, the Prince of Wales made a tour through India. This chiefly entailed visits to the more important princely states. His visit to Jaipur on February 4, 1876 was immortalized in a vast canvas by the Russian painter Vasilii Vasilievich Vereshagin (1842–1904) entitled "The Entry of the Prince of Wales into Jaipur" (Victoria Memorial, Kolkata). It shows a state procession of Mughal magnificence with the future King Edward VII seated in a howdah beside the Maharaja. In the following year Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India at a Durbar presided over by the Viceroy, Lord Lytton. He

8. (facing page) "Maharaja Sher Singh Seated on the Golden Throne of Maharaja Ranjit Singh", by August Theodor Schoeft, c. 1841. Oil on canvas. The Princess Bamba Collection, Department of Archaeology, Lahore Fort Museum.

9. "Maharaja Tukoji II of Indore", by George Landseer, 1861. Private collection.

chose a friend, the well-established London painter, Val Prinsep (1838–1904), to undertake a commission to record this event in another huge painting for presentation to Her Imperial Majesty. The terms of this commission were £5,000 with his passage paid. Prinsep spent 14 months in India making numerous portrait sketches of sometimes taciturn and reluctant princes for the final composition "The Imperial Assemblage at Delhi" (Collection of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II). This was completed three and a half years after the original commission and exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1880. The Proclamation Ceremony on New Year's Day 1877 was such a disappointment to the artist that he asked for, and was granted, permission to make substantial alterations to the scene. The result shows the princes sitting round the Viceroy in a semicircle. The real problem was the sheer scale of the painting – 27 feet (nearly 9 metres) in length – and the result resembles something of a patchwork quilt. Val Prinsep was an artist of great early promise but who had sadly failed to mature. He was not up to the difficulties posed by the perspective in such a vast composition. More successful are the portrait sketches of the princes, done on the spot. Most of these appear to be lost but a group of 17 and a sketch of the Durbar scene itself survive in the Victoria Memorial, Kolkata. In each, Prinsep sought to convey the intricacies of the minds of his sitters. He admirably captured the utter boredom in the face of the Nizam of Hyderabad, Mir Mahbub Ali Khan Asaf Jah VI; the self-importance displayed by the Maharaj Rana of Dholpur, Nihal Singh; and the alertness and fascination for the occasion in the face of a young but unidentified hill state prince.

In 1886, Queen Victoria sent out to India another young Hungarian painter, Rudolf Swoboda (1859–1914) to record for her portraits, not only of the leading princes, but also of numerous minor chieftains and their subjects (figure 10). Swoboda had been almost entirely forgotten until a retrospective exhibition of his portraits from Osborne House, Isle of Wight (Collection of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II) held at the National Gallery, London in 2002. The exhibition revealed a painter of significantly greater ability than any of his contemporaries who travelled to the subcontinent from Europe in that period – with the possible exception of the brilliant but neglected Welsh painter, John Griffiths. His small "Imperial Assemblage – Native Chieftains



10. "His Majesty", an unidentified Indian chieftain, by Rudolf Swoboda, c. 1886. Private collection.

in Front of the Jumma Musjid on the Occasion of the Viceroy Entering Delhi" (Collection of the Marquess of Lansdowne) is an atmospheric and evocative rendering of the events of 1877, that far surpasses Prinsep's monumental canvas. Swoboda's portraits, many executed on panels and in small scale, have a sense of deep and profound empathy with his sitters. He appears to have engaged with each in order to understand and convey their characters, their foibles, their strengths, and their weaknesses. This collection stands as one of the most important records of the princes of India in the closing years of the 19th century.

It was Lord Curzon's own inspiration to sum up, in the Great Durbar of 1903, the magnificence and splendour which he believed to be implicit in the British Raj and its relationship with the princes. Little did he imagine that within less than half a century the sun would set on this imperial experiment. Mortimer Mempes (1860–1938), a protege of James McNeil Whistler, was summoned by the Viceroy to record this last grand Durbar. Like his predecessors, Mempes travelled extensively in upper India

and made numerous small-scale paintings and watercolours of the Viceroy and the princes involved in the Durbar itself. Most of these were published back in England in November 1903 by Mempes himself in a splendid book entitled *Durbar.* The colour illustrations of these portraits are a testament to the extraordinary ability of this painter in capturing the absolute apogee of British and princely power in India. For 50 years prior to Mempes's arrival in India, photography had posed as a serious rival to portrait painting, and it is remarkable that in these years India had continued to attract so many interesting painters who provided for posterity a visual record of the magnificence of the princely age.

Notes

1. This painting first surfaced at Christie's, *Exploration and Travel with Visions of India,* September 21, 2000, lot 215, and subsequently at Sotheby's, *Exotica, East meets West 1500–1900,* May 25, 2005, lot 72.

2. These seven portraits are:

"Shuja-ud-daula with his son Asaf-ud-daula" (Versailles, France);

"Shuja-ud-daula with General Barker" (Victoria Memorial, Kolkata);

"Shuja-ud-daula" (until recently Banqueting House, Chennai, believed to be now in Lucknow State Museum);

"Shuja-ud-daula holding a bow" (Yale, New Haven, USA);

"Shuja-ud-daula, seated, with a hookah" (private collection);

"Shuja-ud-daula with Haider Beg Khan standing on a terrace" (English private collection);

Fragment of a large painting of "Two young sons of Shuja-ud-daula" (French private collection).

3. George Farington was the younger brother of the artist and diarist Joseph Farington. Both brothers appear to have been trained by the leading English landscape artist, Richard Wilson.

4. This portrait is included in the original invoice from the artist to Warren Hastings dated February 21, 1785. Its title is given as "A Kit cat of the Prince of Delhi". It subsequently hung in Warren Hastings' English house, Daylesford, and remained there until after Mrs Hastings' death in 1837. It passed to her niece, Miss Chapuset, who married Thomas Winter, the Rector of Daylesford, and thence to their daughter. Her estate was sold up in 1919 and the painting was acquired by the bookseller, Francis Edwards. It has since been held in two separate private collections.

5. One was given by the Nawab to his servant Francis Baladon Thomas and was purchased in 1906 from his descendants by the India Office, where it remains. The second was given by the Nawab to Sir John Shore (later Lord Teignmouth) in 1797. It was incorrectly attributed to the artist Charles Smith by Mildred Archer (*India and British Portraiture*, London, Sotheby Park Bernet, 1979, p. 181, pl. 112). It has changed hands a number of times recently and has been correctly re-attributed to Zoffany.

6. Arthur William Devis was the 19th child of Arthur Devis (1711–87). He had joined an expedition to China on board *The Antelope* in September 1782 as official draughtsman. On the return journey the vessel was wrecked on Oroolong, one of the Pelew Islands east of Borneo. Having survived this disaster, Devis elected to return to England via Canton and India. Arriving in Calcutta in November 1784, he changed his mind and remained in India for the next 11 years.

7. There seems to be little doubt now that Faiz Baksh was of the royal house of Delhi. This is affirmed by a number of reliable and independent authors (Colonel Philip Meadows Taylor, *The Story of My Life,* London, Oxford University Press, 1877, notes p. 46; Sir Edmund C. Cox, *My Thirty Years in India,* London, Mills and Boon, 1909, p. 37; and others). This is further supported by long-held family tradition and 19th-century papers still held by Faiz Baksh's descendants. This royal provenance was questioned by Desmond Young in his work on General Benoit de Boigne, *Fountain of the Elephants,* London, Collins, 1959, but a recent thorough search through the de Boigne archive in Chambery failed to find evidence to support his conjecture.

8. William Palmer's illustrious career in India is well-documented. After serving in St Kitts, West Indies, Palmer arrived in India in 1766. He was Military Secretary to Warren Hastings from 1776 to 1785, Resident at Gwalior from 1787, and at Poona (Pune) from 1798–1801. Thereafter he was made a General and commanded at Monghyr, Bihar. He died at Berhampur, Bengal, May 20, 1816.

9. Nine of these have been transferred to the Victoria Memorial, Calcutta and seven to Rashtrapati Bhavan in Delhi. Other related works include a portrait of Daulat Rao Scindia (English private collection) and two small portraits of Hindu vakils at Tipu's court at Seringapatam (another English private collection).

10. These comprise two portraits in the India Office Library (Mahadaji Scindia and Bahiro Raghunath Mehendale); two portraits in the Victoria Memorial (Madhu Rao Narayan and Nana Fadnavis); a further portrait of Nana Fadnavis (European private collection); and a portrait of Nur-ul-din Hussain Khan (English private collection).

Portraits of the Nawabs

Images from the Lucknow Court 1775–1856

ROSIE LLEWELLYN-JONES

The nawabi rulers of Awadh have rightly been described as the cultural heirs to the Mughal dynasty of India. Although the territory they ruled over in northern India (today's Uttar Pradesh), could not match the size of the Mughal raj at its height, the nawabs inherited and attracted many of the arts and artists that had illumined the Delhi and Agra courts. The term "Mughal culture" could be usefully broadened to include a number of the more ephemeral arts: not only paintings, jewellery, fabrics, and artefacts, but others which are now known only from contemporary written descriptions or illustrations. The royal fireworkers who spent days supervising the construction of gigantic set-pieces on the banks of the Jumna (Yamuna), stuffing the bellies of model elephants with fireworks and firing rockets from the mouths of "demons" were skilled artists. So too were the architects who devised huge temporary "palaces" and "forts" made out of painted canvas, stretched over bamboo frames. These were hung with lanterns, and decorated for a special party or a princely marriage. (The art persists in some form today in the pandals constructed for the Hindu festival of Durga Puja, notably in Calcutta.) As the central power declined, and regional governments rose in 18th-century India, these royal entertainments were transferred to the Lucknow Court of Awadh, together with the Mughal tradition of the patronage of artists, poets, musicians, dancers, architects, and others, which the nawabs continued to uphold.

1. "Nawab Asaf-ud-daula", by Johann Zoffany, c. 1784–86. Oil on canvas; 42 x 32 cm. Now in a private collection.

Copying the Nawabs' Portraits

A distinct Awadh School of painting was initially identified as long ago as 1955 by Mildred and William Archer,[1] although their classification of 19th-century styles has been challenged by Indian experts.[2] More recently J.P. Losty has contributed a masterly analysis of paintings from Lucknow[3] where the nawabi capital was re-established in 1775. Here skilled artists including Mihr Chand and Mir Kalan Khan were producing beautiful paintings, often based on traditional themes, but sometimes reworked from original European portraits of the nawabs. Indeed, where the nawabs are known to the Western art-lover at all, it is usually through these portraits, commissioned from visiting European artists including Johann Zoffany (1733–1810) and Tilly Kettle (1735–86), who are classified as "Company painters". (In fact this designation, though commonly accepted, is not entirely accurate, for while it is true that men like Zoffany, Kettle, the Daniells, and others had to get permission from the East India Company to travel upcountry to Awadh, they were not employed by the Company. They sought commissions from the wealthy nawabs and their courtiers to finance their lengthy expeditions.) But between the two schools of superior painters, the Indian and the European, seems to lie a third, as yet unnamed. It consisted of a group of professional, but not always very skilled, copyists – men whose job it was to turn out reproductions of nawabi portraits. Their work is generally unsigned and we cannot, at present, link it to the names of Indian artists known to have been working in Lucknow at the time.

There are several reasons why a ready supply of nawabi pictures was always in demand, and some of them of course are not peculiar to Awadh. The idea of a ruler gifting a portrait of himself to someone as a mark of special favour was common across India from the Mughal period. When it happened, often in a ceremonial occasion at the durbar, it was the recipient who was honoured, not the giver. (This was a reversal of the tributes paid to a *pir* or religious figure, where merit would accrue to the donor, especially if the gifts were particularly costly or unusual.) One of the most splendid portraits of the Nawab Asaf-ud-daula (r. 1775–97) by Johann Zoffany, was given by the Nawab to Sir John Shore, the Governor General during his visit to Lucknow in 1797, "as a memorial of friendship" (figure 1). The Nawab was conferring a signal honour on the powerful head of the East India Company. Shore received it ungraciously, noting privately that it was *not* set in diamonds, but that it bore "a strong resemblance to the Nabob; and for which, to say the truth, I would not give two-pence".[4]

As European influence in Awadh increased during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, we find reports of foreigners at court required to wear on their bosoms a miniature of the ruling nawab. The miniature gave them entry to the durbar, or refused them entry if they forgot to pin it on.[5] Set in diamonds, the miniature was presented to a new employee on taking up his post. Sometimes a portrait gift was given to a commoner by the nawab, out of genuine affection. Joseph Queiros, an old Spanish employee of the Nawab Ghazi-ud-din Haider (r. 1814–27) received a portrait of the Nawab, which remained with him until his death. His family then returned it to the Nawab, thanking him for the honour he had bestowed on the Queiros family by his gift.

We know from written accounts and interior views of the nawabi palaces that the public rooms were hung with pictures in the European style. A painting of Nawab Ghazi-ud-din Haider entertaining the Earl of Moira and his wife to dinner includes pictures of race-horses decorating the walls of the dining room. The throne room of the last nawab, Wajid Ali Shah (r. 1847–56) contained pictures in a mock heroic style of cherubs with Roman shields and armour copied from, or inspired by, a European work.[6] By the middle of the 19th century there were four great palace complexes in Lucknow, and a substantial number of *kothis* (large houses) belonging to the nawabs and their numerous relatives. Providing enough paintings to hang on all these walls clearly kept a large atelier of artists and copyists busy. Poor though some of these copies are, they should not be discounted, because in some cases they represent lost originals by prominent European artists.

Lack of a Comprehensive Catalogue

It is surprising that no one has attempted to catalogue the portraits of the nawabs, but anyone with even a superficial knowledge of the subject will be struck by the number of copies, copies of copies, alternative versions, and collages produced during the 80-odd years of nawabi rule. This chapter will concentrate on previously unknown portraits of the nawabs, mainly in the

Husainabad Picture Gallery, Lucknow, which were recently photographed for the first time, for the author. Figure 2 shows Nawab Asaf-ud-daula engaged in one of his favourite pastimes, cock-fighting. The scene is set before a tented structure, a shamiana, on the bank of the River Gomti. The Nawab, identified by his drooping moustaches and shaded by a parasol, is gesturing towards the birds at his feet. (His peculiar red trousers have been over-painted later.) East India Company officials are pictured to his right, including a seated man who is playing a musical instrument, possibly a harpsichord. The Englishman in informal Company dress of white trousers and blue mess jacket with gold embroidery may be Colonel John Mordaunt, the Nawab's great favourite, who appears in the best-known picture of a nawabi cock-fight, by Zoffany, now in the Tate Britain Gallery.[7] Certainly the Nawab's gestures, and those of the man in the red turban to his left, mimic those of the Zoffany painting. The Lucknow picture, damaged and defaced by 20th-century graffiti, is nonetheless a lively representation of a popular event, halfway between the static miniatures of court officials in the Mughal tradition, and the active depiction of a real entertainment, caught by a European artist.

Saadat Ali Khan (r. 1798–1814), brother and successor to Asaf-ud-daula, was a sophisticated and gregarious man, well-liked by the English for his adoption of many of their values, which he acquired during a 20-year enforced exile in Calcutta. He was a fine horseman, with a passionate interest in horse-breeding, who rode to hounds with an equipage that was the envy of many a Company man. He is shown here in English riding dress and boots, with a riding crop, although the two curved swords at his waist strike an odd note, as do the two attendants running after him with a parasol (figure 3). There is a cognate portrait in the India Office Library Collections, London, and we can speculate that both of these were based on a lost series of paintings by the court artist George Place (fl. 1775–1805), showing the Nawab enjoying his favourite sport.

2. "Nawab Asaf-ud-daula with Fighting Cocks", by an unknown artist. Gouache; 20.5 x 18 cm. Husainabad Picture Gallery, Lucknow.

Figure 4 comes from the State Museum, Lucknow and is a pencil drawing of the Nawab Ghazi-ud-din Haider in a splendid dress, bedecked with jewels but wearing an awkwardly combined turban and crown, with *sarpech* and plumes. Nothing could more clearly demonstrate his anomalous position as both Nawab and King. He had been "crowned" in 1819 by the British Resident, in a gesture designed to wean him away from his allegiance to the fading Mughal emperor, from whom he held his title as Nawab Wazir. It was also to attract him into the expanding fold of

3. "Nawab Saadat Ali Khan on Horseback", by an unknown artist. Gouache; 31 x 36 cm. Husainabad Picture Gallery, Lucknow.

4. "Nawab Ghazi-ud-din Haider", by an unknown artist. Pencil drawing; size unknown. State Museum, Lucknow, ref: 37.267.

compliant rulers, as the Company increased its political hold on native states. To his right stands one of the chairs designed for his coronation by the English court artist Robert Home,[8] while to his left is a composite building with elements from the Shah Najaf, which he commissioned as his tomb. This in turn was based on a Shi'ite monument in Iraq and therefore an important statement of his role as defender of the Shi'a faith in India. He is a man truly caught between two opposing cultures, upholder of his Muslim faith, yet a political tool of the intrusive and ultimately victorious English Company.

Nawab Mohammed Ali Shah (r. 1837–42) was an old and sick man when he came unexpectedly to the throne. Figure 5 shows a stolid figure plumped on the throne, with his Chief Minister, Hakim Mehdi, in attendance. Poorly executed, with none of the skill, or pathos, of figure 4, this may nevertheless be a copy of something better, possibly by George Duncan Beechey, the court artist.[9] Note that the *chhattar,* the ceremonial parasol, is now reduced to an insignificant little umbrella that seems to be growing out of the Nawab's halo, but that the crown bestowed by the East India Company is now firmly on his head, and that he has given up the traditional turban. The caption in Urdu tells us that he is pictured in the "Kothi Farhat Bakhsh", part of the palace complex developed between 1803 and 1848. Across the

5. "Nawab Mohammed Ali Shah", by an unknown artist. Gouache; size unknown. State Museum, Lucknow, ref: 13.38.

river stands the recognizable Dilaram, a European-style house, named here as "Ferdaus Manzil".

Nawabi Credentials through Group Portraits

A number of 19th-century "group portraits" of the nawabs are known, where all of them are pictured together, in a kind of visual family tree. The message is clear. As political influence by the East India Company increased, threatening the very existence of their "kingdom", the nawabs wanted to show where they had come from, and who their distinguished ancestors were. They were pictured with a solid line of forefathers, each important enough to have been painted, which gave them status and antecedents in a contemporary setting. Figure 6, a depiction of the nawabs seated, with their chief ministers standing behind them, dates from about 1850, because the young Wajid Ali Shah, the last crowned nawab, has already taken his seat to the extreme right. This formal picture, set in a European-style room, with its vanishing perspective, portrays the nawabs more as decorative objects lining the walls, than as individuals, presciently foreshadowing their relegation to history.

The group portrait in the Husainabad Gallery (figure 7) is probably about seven or eight years earlier, that is, c. 1842, because the new Nawab Amjad Ali Shah (r. 1842–47) has been patched in from a separate cut-down painting. In this picture the Nawab Nasir-ud-din Haider (r. 1827–37), third from right, and distinguished by his heavy sideburns and slender figure, strikes an odd note as the only one in European dress, which he is known to have preferred. He appears again in figure 8 in similar dress, and ermine cape, carried on high by the ladies of the court. He reclines in a lightweight, possibly wickerwork, throne, padded with pink satin. Across the river, to the left, an elephant fight is in progress, the poor beasts urged on by men with heated iron staves. Another painting shows the same Nawab on horseback, inspecting his troops. The naive painter, unskilled though he is, has clearly understood the importance of court hierarchy. While the four turbaned ministers with the Nawab are almost in proportion, as is the mounted cavalry behind him, the European officer at the extreme bottom right is an awkward size. This may be Captain R.J.H. Magness, Commandant of the Nawab's Bodyguard of 200 horse who, in spite of his title, received only a small salary

6. (previous pages) Group portrait of the nawabs, by an unknown artist, c. 1850. Gouache; 43.5 x 64 cm. Reproduced by kind permission of the Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art, MSS.941.1.

7. Group portrait of the nawabs, single portrait of Nawab Amjad Ali Shah attached, by unknown artists, c. 1842–47. Gouache; overall size 20.5 x 29.5 cm. Husainabad Picture Gallery, Lucknow.

Nawab Sooject-ood-Dowlah Bahadoor
Nawab Munsoor Ali Khan Subidar Jung
Nawab Saadut Khan - Borran-ool-Moolk
Nawab Asuf-ood Dowlah Bahadoor
Nawab Sandut Ali Khan Bahadoor
Gazeroodeen Heyder Bad-shah
Nasseroodeen Heyder Padshah
Mohammed Ali Shah

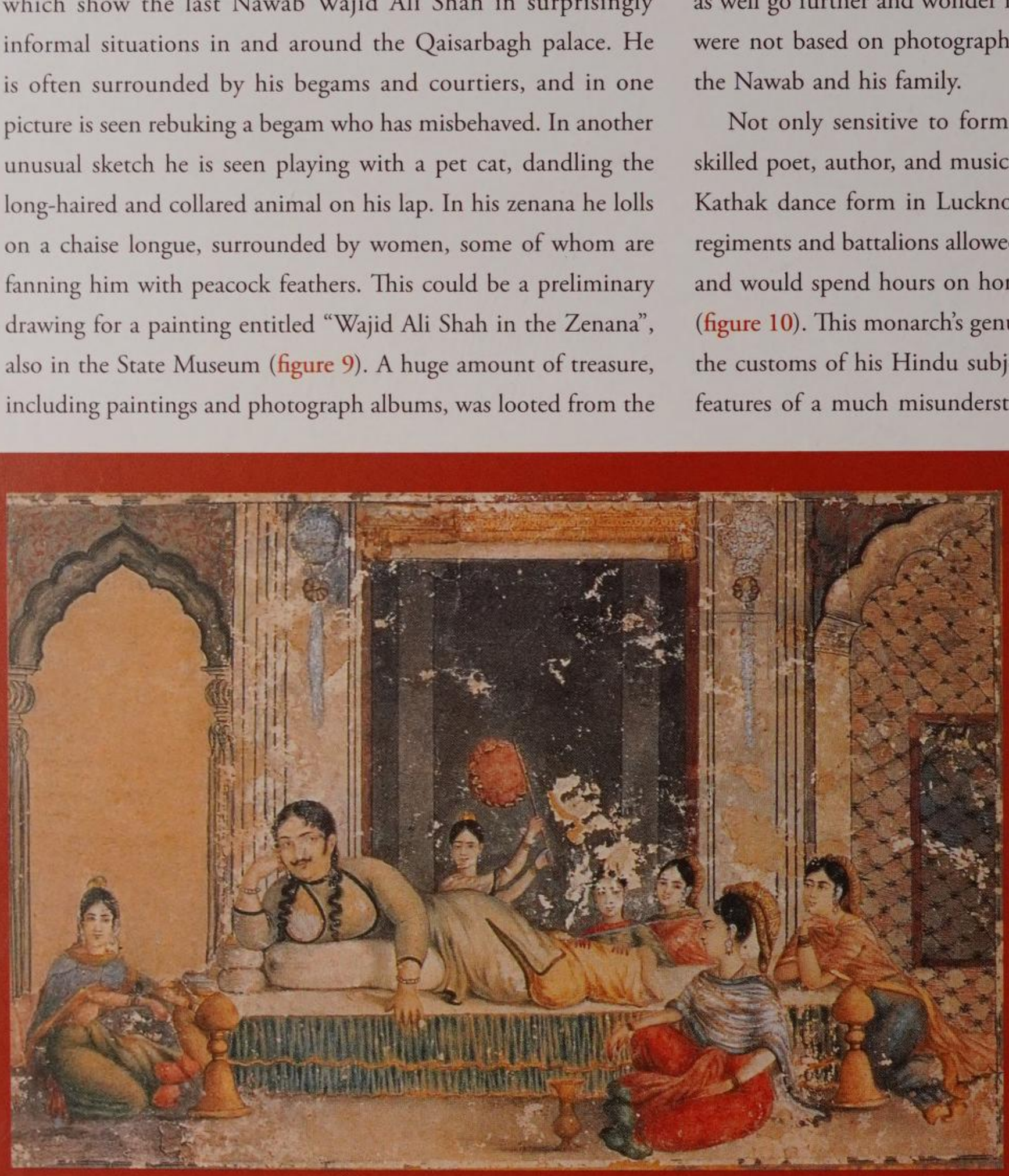
8. "Nawab Nasir-ud-din Haider Carried by Ladies", by an unknown artist. Gouache; 21 x 21 cm. Husainabad Picture Gallery, Lucknow.

compared to other Europeans at court and who therefore did not have the same status, or as it seems here, stature. The minute, stick-like figures standing along the wooded road, are the general public, properly cut down to size. The European buildings, visible through the trees, are part of La Martiniere College (Constantia), with its distinctive central turret.

The Last Nawab, Wajid Ali Shah

The Lucknow State Museum holds a number of pencil sketches which show the last Nawab Wajid Ali Shah in surprisingly informal situations in and around the Qaisarbagh palace. He is often surrounded by his begams and courtiers, and in one picture is seen rebuking a begam who has misbehaved. In another unusual sketch he is seen playing with a pet cat, dandling the long-haired and collared animal on his lap. In his zenana he lolls on a chaise longue, surrounded by women, some of whom are fanning him with peacock feathers. This could be a preliminary drawing for a painting entitled "Wajid Ali Shah in the Zenana", also in the State Museum (figure 9). A huge amount of treasure, including paintings and photograph albums, was looted from the Qaisarbagh palace in March 1858, when Lucknow was recaptured by the British. What remains today in the State Museum appears to be part of a larger album containing sketches for a series of paintings showing the Nawab's daily pastimes. Wajid Ali Shah is seen today by sympathetic historians as the most "traditional" of the nawabs, and a man of culture. It may not be fanciful to suggest that he was trying to recreate a pictorial history of his reign in the great Mughal tradition, and that the lost paintings were part of a planned *Nawabnama*.[10] Having gone this far, we may as well go further and wonder if some of the sketches themselves were not based on photographs taken by Ahmad Ali Khan[11] of the Nawab and his family.

Not only sensitive to former glories, Wajid Ali Shah was a skilled poet, author, and musician who learnt and promoted the Kathak dance form in Lucknow. He gave poetic names to the regiments and battalions allowed him by the East India Company and would spend hours on horseback watching military parades (figure 10). This monarch's genuine interest, as a Muslim ruler, in the customs of his Hindu subjects, is one of the most attractive features of a much misunderstood man. Once a year he would



9. "Nawab Wajid Ali Shah in the Zenana", by an unknown artist. Gouache; size unknown. State Museum, Lucknow, ref: 59.97.

10. "Nawab Wajid Ali Shah on Horseback", by an unknown artist. Pen-and-ink drawing, with silver leaf detail; 26 x 36 cm. Husainabad Picture Gallery, Lucknow.

open the gardens of the Qaisarbagh palace to the public, and would himself act the part of the God Krishna in a traditional drama. The ladies of the court played the part of the milkmaids whose clothes were stolen by Krishna as they were bathing.

The Hindu celebration of Vasant (the spring festival) is shown in figure 11, an extraordinary scene on the River Gomti, and of which there seem to be no written descriptions. Everyone in the picture is wearing yellow, the colour of spring, from the mounted cavalry on the riverbank to the elephants, the courtiers, the court ladies, and the dancers. Even the wife of the British Resident (centre on the top deck), has managed a low-cut yellow dress. Only the Resident himself strikes a discordant note in the Company's red uniform, and if this was William Sleeman, Resident for much of the Nawab's reign, he would be feeling very uncomfortable indeed, for it was his reports on the dreadful state of Awadh, as he perceived it, that became a powerful factor in its annexation.

To the Resident's left sits Wajid Ali Shah, waiting for the entertainment to begin. A dancing bear and a mounted camel sail past on a barge, and musicians and actors on punts join in. There

were a large number of gorgeous state barges used for festive occasions that sailed up and down the Gomti, some of them designed and fitted up by Europeans. This particular one looks rather unstable, with the ladies in the cabins on the lower deck perilously near the water-line. But it is an enchanting picture, full of detail, even down to the sweet-seller on the bank, with his yellow *laddu*s on a tray, and the elephants waiting patiently with their empty howdahs, ready to carry the Nawab and the Resident back home.

Figure 12 is a miniature on ivory of the last nawab, with finely painted features and rich jewellery. He is wearing his favourite *nukkadar* cap, embroidered with heavy silver-wire thread. The likeness captured here of the young man, a plump but dignified figure, is borne out by the photographs known of him in later life. His serious expression seems to foreshadow the tragedies that were soon to beset his kingdom and end his reign. The pictures discussed here may not be great works of art, but they tell their own story of this ill-fated dynasty and the history of nawabi Awadh.

11. "Nawab Wajid Ali Shah at the Spring Festival", by an unknown artist. Gouache; 31 x 36.5 cm. Husainabad Picture Gallery, Lucknow.

12. "Nawab Wajid Ali Shah", by an unknown artist. Painted miniature on ivory; 4 x 5.5 cm. Husainabad Picture Gallery, Lucknow.

Notes

1. M. and W.G. Archer, *Indian Painting for the British 1770–1880*, London, OUP, 1955.

2. R.C. Sharma, "Awadh School of Painting", leaflet issued by the Government of India Tourist Office, Lucknow, no date, but probably c. 1980.

3. J.P. Losty, "Painting at Lucknow 1775–1850" in Rosie Llewellyn-Jones, ed., *Lucknow, Then and Now*, Mumbai, Marg Publications, 2003.

4. V. Manners and G. Williamson, *John Zoffany RA*, London and New York, John Lane, 1920, p. 93. The portrait was sold through Spink & Son, London in November 1996.

5. William Stevenson, surgeon; Lieutenant Crommelin, military engineer; and Arthur Du Bois, aide-de-camp, all got miniatures of Nawab Nasir-ud-din Haider when they entered his service in October 1828. India Political Consultations, October 24, 1828. No. 35, India Office Records, London.

6. Two of these pictures are in the Royal Engineers Officers' Mess at Chatham, Kent. They were presented to the Mess by Sir Colin Campbell who led the recapture of Lucknow in 1858.

7. See Rosie Llewellyn-Jones, "Major General Claude Martin: a French connoisseur in eighteenth-century India", *Apollo*, Vol. CXLV, No. 421, p. 19, March 1997, for a reproduction of this painting.

8. A similar chair designed by Robert Home is in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, together with the artist's drawings for it.

9. George Duncan Beechey was the son of Sir William Beechey, portrait painter to George III and Queen Charlotte. He was appointed official portrait painter to the Awadh court in 1835 and remained there for the rest of his life. The majority of his paintings were lost at sea in 1851.

10. The exquisite *Padshahnama,* the album recording the life of the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan, had been purchased by Wajid Ali Shah's great-great-uncle, Asaf-ud-daula. It was probably among albums looted from the Delhi palace by the Rohilla chief Ghulam Kadir Khan, and sold to the Nawab. It was generously given to Sir John Shore in 1799, who presented it to George III.

11. Two photograph albums by Ahmad Ali Khan are in the India Office Library Collections, London. They were looted from the Qaisarbagh palace, and presented to the reporter W.H. Russell. Ahmad Ali Khan photographed the Nawab's courtiers, wives, and prominent people of Lucknow, including Europeans, in 1855/56.

Portraiture at the Tanjore Maratha Court

Toward Modernity in the Early 19th Century

INDIRA VISWANATHAN PETERSON

In the visual arts, as in other spheres of cultural production, the Maratha court of Tanjore (now Thanjavur) from 1674 to 1855 was a leader in innovations that signalled the transition to modernity in south India. Portraiture developed relatively late in the Maratha reign, and blossomed above all in paintings of royal figures, the focus of this essay. Tanjore court portraits, especially from the 19th century, index the major changes in representational and visual practices that characterized the shift to colonial modernity. At the same time, they point to the complex nature of that shift, and of the agendas that underpinned Maratha royal self-presentation in the 19th century.

The Rise of Portraiture in Tanjore: From the Nayakas to Company Painting

In 1674, when Tanjore was captured by Ekoji Bhonsle, a half-brother of the Maratha leader Shivaji, the Telugu Nayakas, an offshoot of the Vijayanagara empire, had ruled the south Indian kingdom for 141 years. Situated in the Kaveri delta, an early site of cultural florescence in the Tamil region, the Nayaka court at the capital city of Tanjore was a major centre of literature and the arts.

Maratha projects in temple building and the arts of the temple were on a more modest scale than those of their predecessors. On the other hand, the Marathas not only built on the Nayaka legacy, but led innovative movements in literature, dance, music, and painting, in rich works that reflected the court's polyglot cultural ambience. It was only in the late 18th century, however, in close relationship with major changes in south Indian society and politics in the formative years of British colonial power, that the Maratha kings became interested in portraiture, especially in painted likenesses that were quite different from the south Indian temple sculptures that have been identified as royal portraits of the Nayaka era.[1]

By the reign of Tulajaji II (1763–87), the small and fiscally unstable kingdom of Tanjore was a pawn in the hands of its overlord, the Nawab of the Carnatic (or Arcot), Muhammad Ali, and *his* overlord, the British East India Company. British troops were garrisoned in Tanjore city from 1773, and at the death of Tulajaji, the Company settled a succession dispute between his adopted son Serfoji II (also known as Sarabhoji) and a rival claimant, Amar Singh, in favour of the latter. However, Serfoji was given British protection and a European education, and was placed on the Tanjore throne in 1798. In 1799, at the end of the Mysore Wars, the British Company emerged as the supreme power in the Carnatic. That very year, Serfoji was forced to sign a treaty with the Company, ceding Tanjore to the British in return for titular rulership and a pension. The Tanjore kingdom was dissolved in 1855, at the death of Serfoji's son Shivaji II.[2]

Heightened contact with the British and other Europeans at a time when colonial rule was not fully entrenched in south India was a major factor in the Tanjore rulers' new interest in portraiture, an important genre in European art and social life. Tulajaji and his successors were not merely intrigued by new models for likenesses, but recognized the usefulness of portraits as instruments in political and social negotiations with their British allies and overlords. A key element in the rise of new forms of portraiture was the plentiful availability in Tanjore, both of European artists and their works, and of traditional Indian artists who had been trained in European techniques, and who had developed the hybrid "Company" style of painting, so called because of its association with European patrons and techniques.

In the second half of the 18th century, painting was the dominant medium for portraits in European Madras. British society in Madras was served by a number of celebrated British portraitists; the military events of the Mysore Wars also stimulated portraiture. The city of Tanjore, with its great 11th-century temple of Shiva Brihadisvara, was a major destination for British artists in search of the picturesque, such as the famed William and Thomas Daniell. In the 1780s Tanjore also became a centre of production for Indian artists of the "Moochy" (Mochi) caste. These miniature painters had been dispersed from the Bijapur, Golconda, and Hyderabad courts of the Deccan, and many of them had worked under European artists, surveyors, and scientists, producing drawings of architectural monuments, animals, plants, and people. Mochi painters flocked to the cultural centre and garrison city of Tanjore to seek court patronage and to sell to European clients souvenir paintings on a range of local subjects, from Hindu deities to caste and occupational types. The painters at the Tanjore court came from this pool of "Company" artists, whose work combined the delicacy, clarity of line and colour, and precision of Indian miniatures with European oil and watercolour techniques.

1. (previous page) Serfoji II with his son Shivaji II. Sarasvati Mahal Library, Thanjavur. Photograph courtesy Prince Babaji Chhatrapati Bhonsle, Thanjavur Palace.

Serfoji II and the Development of the Visual Arts

Although several portraits are available of Tulajaji II, and of Amar Singh (1787–98), it is during Serfoji's reign (b. 1777; r. 1798–1832) that royal portraits began to proliferate.[3] In addition to the traditional gouache, Serfoji's court artists produced royal portraits in watercolour and oils, on wood, cloth, canvas, and ivory. The development of the visual arts in early 19th-century Tanjore was shaped more than any other factor by Serfoji's unique, hybrid personality and unusual background, and his wide-ranging intellectual aspirations. The King's interest in portraiture was part of a larger personal interest in European arts and sciences, and in new modes of visual representation, stimulated by his English education, unusual for his time, with German missionaries in Tanjore and Madras. George Annesley, Viscount Valentia, who visited Serfoji in 1804, remarks that the King studied painting in a "drawing room", which had walls "...covered with prints and pictures of every possible kind...", and which was equipped with a table on which lay "...paper, colours, and every implement of drawing, another amusement of which he is very fond". Serfoji favourably evaluated the drawings of Henry Salt, Valentia's official artist. He also presented the Viscount with a scale drawing of the great stone bull at the Brihadisvara temple, made by a "country draftsman of great merit".

We must remember that painting as art occupied only a small space in Serfoji's intellectual interests, for his ambition was nothing less than the mastery of the full range of Enlightenment knowledge. The royal polymath mastered several European and Indian languages, read widely in European literature, history, and geography, studied and conducted experiments in chemistry, botany, and zoology, and collected natural history specimens and an impressive personal library of European printed books on all of these subjects, many of them lavishly illustrated. Serfoji's major commissions for his court artists consisted of illustrations for his experiments in European sciences, especially natural history and medicine, which were his fields of special interest. Serfoji kept in close touch with European naturalists and learned societies in India and abroad. He presented to Benjamin Torin, the British Resident, an album of natural history drawings done by his court painters, with his own handwritten observational notes on each page, regarding the animal or bird depicted thereon.

2. Pratap Singh with Tulajaji II. Sarasvati Mahal Library, Thanjavur. Photograph courtesy Prince Babaji Chhatrapati Bhonsle, Thanjavur palace.

Royal Portraits at the 19th-century Maratha Court

The heightened individualization of the subject, and a naturalistic portrayal of the face and figure constitute the major representational shift in Maratha royal portraits. In portraits executed throughout Serfoji's reign, the sitters are individualized and humanized through the adoption of European realist and naturalistic techniques. The traditional profile view of the royal figure, exemplified in the portrait of Pratap Singh (1739–63) and his son Tulajaji (figure 2) is replaced by the three-quarter view face or the frontal stance of European portraiture (for example figure 3). Even the earliest of the Maratha royal portraits represent the king without supernatural attributes such as halos (ubiquitous in Mughal and Rajput court portraits), and with little overt use of symbolism. At the same time, royal authority, distance, and grandeur are conveyed through hieratic postures, and through conventions of size, dress, and ornament. The effect is of a recognizable individual as well as an iconic figure, but one that is differentiated from divine icons.

Tanjore court portraits from the late 18th and early 19th centuries depict royal figures in static poses, usually in a seated posture, and in interior settings. Only two subgenres, equestrian and processional portraits, depict the king as engaging in any kind of activity. The formal, ceremonial quality of these royal portraits contrasts with the liveliness of Nayaka paintings and other regional

models, such as Deccani court painting, where rulers are portrayed as engaging in heroic and pleasurable activities at the hunt, battle, or the harem.[4] The portraits are also very different from the vibrant illustrations Serfoji commissioned for literary and scientific texts, and from the mural and manuscript paintings and sculptures on myths and everyday life for the palace and temples. In Serfoji's reign, paintings of rulers on cloth and canvas were displayed at the Tanjore palace, in the king's upstairs chamber known as the Sadar Madi, and in the Nayaka and Maratha Durbar Halls. A life-size European marble statue of the king, placed in the Nayaka Durbar Hall, was a major attraction for visitors to the palace. As public icons, royal portraits projected the presence, power, and authority of the king and his lineage. Dynastic image galleries and father-son portraits were particularly prominent as items of public display at Serfoji's court, indexing the king's anxieties regarding genealogy, legitimacy, and status.

An important factor in the proliferation of portraits was their newfound use as ceremonial gifts to friends and allies. The southern Marathas shared in dress, language, and other areas, the hybrid Indo-Persianate court culture of their western Indian cousins, and, like the Mughal, Deccani, and Rajput kings, they followed the practice of the ceremonial gifting of shawls and other objects to dignitaries. At the end of the 18th century, when Serfoji became king, portraits, which were already part of the culture of gift exchange at many Indian courts, were incorporated into the Tanjore court's ceremonial transactions with the British Company.[5] Such rituals had become part of the British Company's own expectations regarding the protocol of transactions with Indian rulers.

The Portrait as Exhibit and Gift

The prolific use made of portraits in exchanges with the British by Muhammad Ali, the wealthy Nawab of the Carnatic, was perhaps a model for the Marathas. Muhammad Ali and his son Azim-ud-daulah commissioned from the most famous British portraitists in Madras, including Tilly Kettle, large portraits in oils of themselves and their children, and presented the portraits to King George III, the Governor of Madras, and other Company officials.[6] However, despite his Europeanized tastes, except for the two sculptures by John Flaxman, Serfoji did not commission any portraits from British artists. Cost could not have been the only consideration in the King's preference for Indian painters, since he did not hesitate to pay for expensive European sculpture. It would seem that he preferred the size and aesthetic of "Company" style portraits for his multiple audiences and purposes. In larger than miniature-size paintings, the court painters skilfully translated European conventions into an Indian miniaturist idiom that was attractive and comprehensible to both the European and the Indian dignitaries who viewed them at Serfoji's court, or received them as a gift. In visual images, as in other spheres of activity, Serfoji's hybrid persona presented an Indian face even as it gestured toward the West.

The Tanjore Palace Marathi records in the Modi script and the reports of European visitors reveal much about practices related to portraiture at Serfoji's court. Visitors were taken to the King's Sadar Madi room, where a large gallery of portraits immediately caught their eye. Writing in 1804, Valentia reports: "One side of the room opened to a verandah; the opposite side was covered with portraits of the Tanjore princes of the Mahratta dynasty downwards in succession, from Sevagee its founder." "The pictures were in handsome gilt frames, painted on canvas by a native artist, from drawings on the walls of the palace, many of which were going to decay."[7] The portrait gallery included not only Serfoji's ancestors, but also European luminaries (Napoleon), kings, British officials (the Earl of Moira, later the Marquess of Hastings, who was Governor General, 1813–23), and Serfoji's beloved mentor, the Reverend C.F. Schwartz.[8] Among the many European guests who received the King's portrait as a gift of remembrance was Lady Clive, wife of the Governor of Madras, who visited him in 1800, along with Anna Tonelli, governess to her daughters. Tonelli made a watercolour portrait sketch of Serfoji for Lord Clive, and not long after Lady Clive's return to England, the King sent her portraits of himself, Tulajaji, and Tulajaji's father Pratap Singh (1739–63).[9] A copy of the portrait of the Reverend Schwartz was the favoured gift for visiting clerics, such as Bishop Middleton in 1816. In 1827, Serfoji sent a portrait of Schwartz to the widow of Bishop Heber who had died suddenly the previous year, soon after his visit to Tanjore.

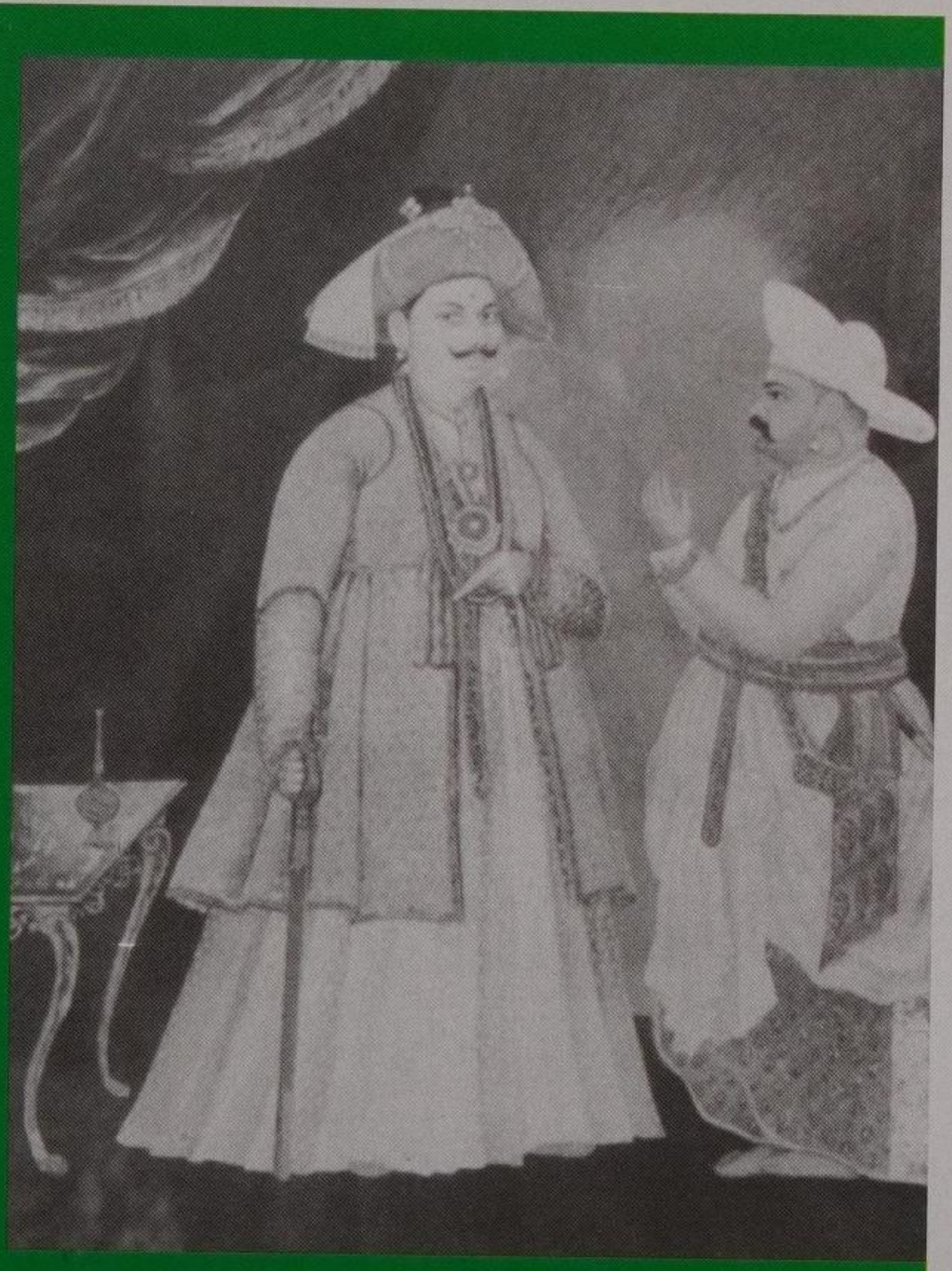
The Modi records give several instances of Serfoji's direct involvement in the design of his portraits. In an 1821 letter from

Farrukhabad, where he had camped during his long pilgrimage to Benares, the king gives detailed instructions regarding a head-and-shoulders portrait to be made of himself in response to a request from the Governor General in Calcutta. The portrait was to be painted in oils on good canvas by a "Master Chinnaswami Nayakkan". The frame was to be made out of quality wood, and "finely carved and gilded by Kuppa painter". The painting was to be one cubit square, "the same size as the portrait of General Lepton [?] Saheb, which is kept above the armoire on the right side of the top stair in the staircase going up to the Sadar Madi".[10]

The Faces of the King

We may now take a closer look at specific portraits from the Tanjore Maratha court. The full-length portrait of Serfoji with his minister (figure 3), one of the three presented to Lady Clive in 1800, while in many respects typical of the Tanjore portrait style in its early phase, is unusual on account of its striking use of symbolism.[11] Without great concessions to illusionism, the painter has deployed several conventions of 18th-century portraiture – the heavy velvet drapes on one side, the cabriole-legged table, the interior with a generic, shadowy background. The most intriguing feature of the painting is Serfoji's pose, which alludes to yet another convention of European Baroque and Rococo era portraits, where the sitter points at an object or scene that is a symbol of personal, political, or philosophical significance. Here, the king stands facing the viewer, holding a sword with his right hand, and pointing at it with his left. What might be the meaning of this gesture? The sword, most likely one of the two state swords of the Tanjore Marathas, described in a British record as "...the hereditary possessions of the holder of the Tanjore Raj, which could be used or worn by the Rajah only",[12] is fraught with symbolic significance. Even as it recalls the legendary sword of Shivaji I, the great Maratha chief, said to have been given to him by the Goddess Bhavani, the weapon surely alludes to Serfoji's legitimacy as a member of the Maratha lineage beginning with Shivaji, and as the rightful occupant of the Tanjore throne, a claim that Serfoji may have wished to record or emphasize at the end of the succession dispute that had nearly cost him the throne.[13] Furthermore, it appears that this portrait directly quotes a nearly identical one of Amar Singh, Serfoji's rival (figure 4), most likely done sometime during the former's reign and exhibiting other conventions of 18th-century European portraiture, in the chair, the balcony, and the hint of a landscape with trees.[14] Although the sitter for this portrait (now in the Government Museum, Chennai) has not been named, there is good reason to believe that it is Amar Singh. Portraits of this king consistently depict him with a dark skin, in contrast to Serfoji and the other Maratha rulers.[15] More

4. Amar Singh of Tanjore. Government Museum, Chennai. Photograph courtesy Simon Rasten.



3. King Serfoji II of Tanjore. By kind permission of the National Trust, The Clive Collection, Powis Castle, Wales.

5. Portrait ivory of Serfoji II. National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen.

importantly, in the portrait in question he, too, is leaning against a sword and pointing at it with his left hand, proclaiming, no doubt, the legitimacy of his own claim. The replacement of the balcony in this painting by the deferential minister in the Serfoji picture appears to be one more gesture towards legitimation.

The oval miniature portrait of Serfoji from the National Museum of Denmark (figure 5), attests to the popularity of European-style portrait ivories at the Maratha court as in other Indian courts in the 18th and 19th centuries. This portrait, in a silver frame engraved with the words "Serfojee Maha Rajah of Tanjore", is clearly a partial copy of the portrait given to Lady Clive (see figure 3). A second miniature at the same Museum, of Serfoji as an older man, owes much more to European naturalism and illusionism, with more shading and modelling. These portraits were probably given to officials at the Danish settlement of Tranquebar (now Tharangambadi), which also served as headquarters for the Protestant Mission established in 1705, whose German missionaries played a vital part in Tanjore Maratha politics.[16] The annual tribute paid by Tranquebar to

the Maratha court assumed particularly great significance in the court's royal pretensions in the 19th century, when Tanjore was under British control.

Processional and Equestrian Portraits, and Sculpture

Grand processional paintings, an old staple of Indian court portraiture, were very much in vogue at the Tanjore court. The Victoria and Albert Museum has a processional painting of Tulajaji II on horseback, and another showing Amar Singh and Serfoji in gilded carriages drawn by bullocks (figures 6 and 7). There is a splendid processional scene with Serfoji (figure 8) in the British Library's India Office Collections. The three paintings document aspects of the Maratha royal retinue and illustrate the range of variations within the Company style from Tulajaji's to Serfoji's court.

6. (right) Tulajaji II in procession. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

7. (below) Amar Singh in procession, with Serfoji II. Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

All three paintings convey the pomp and glory of the Tanjore royal procession. The ruler rides in state, accompanied by soldiers, bodyguards, musicians, and men carrying royal symbols, including pennants, staves, spears, flywhisks, and the royal parasol. The two later paintings (figures 7 and 8) add elephants, kettledrums, and female *devadasi* dancers. While Tulajaji's retinue consists exclusively of men in Indian dress and Maratha turbans (attention is paid to diversity in skin colour and physical appearance), those of Amar Singh, and of Serfoji in the 1820s portrait, depict greater variation in dress and posture. Like the gun salutes that determined royal rank in colonial India, the soldiers in European uniform and the European band, depicted prominently in the two later paintings, are signs of modernity as well as status symbols.

Employing greater naturalism in nearly every respect (compared to the two older paintings), the Serfoji portrait also differs in representing the king frontally, with his body turned toward the viewer. And yet, this portrait subscribes as little to European illusionism as the others, opting for the "magical realism" that characterizes popular Indian painting

8. Serfoji II in procession, 1820s. British Library, India Office Collection.

even today. For example, whereas the viewer sees Tulajaji's horse through a "natural" gap in the retinue that surrounds him, Serfoji and his horse are seen as almost rising up above a wall of marching soldiers and other moving figures. In all three paintings, royal status, and the status of figures in relation to one another are conveyed through typically hybrid strategies. Larger than the other figures in the painting, Tulajaji is clearly intended to be the centre of the viewer's attention. In the Amar Singh painting, Serfoji is depicted as being smaller in size than the King, and as riding a much smaller carriage. In the Serfoji procession, the King stands out as a large, luminous figure in white, placed nearly at the centre of the painting, while the smaller figure of Prince Shivaji, wearing clothing of a red hue that blends with other figures, is shown closer to the painting's left margin. As we shall see, however, in other paintings Serfoji brought Shivaji to the foreground, stressing his status as heir-apparent. Painfully aware that the British Company stood ready to take over Tanjore if questions arose over succession to the throne, the king was constantly reminding his overlords of the legitimacy of Shivaji's claim to the office, and the necessity for Tanjore to continue to be ruled by his family.

Serfoji commissioned a number of equestrian paintings of himself and his son. For him, as for other Indian monarchs and for his British overlords, the equestrian royal portrait was an icon of martial attributes and power. On February 3, 1821, the king wrote to the Tanjore palace from Jyalesvara near Patna, where he had halted during his 1821–22 pilgrimage to Benares, asking that two

equestrian portraits, of himself and Shivaji, be prepared and sent to him immediately. These portraits must have been requisitioned as gifts for the Governor General, whom Serfoji planned to meet in Calcutta, with the particular intention of securing the succession of Tanjore for his son.[17] The king specified that the portraits should be about a cubit (16 inches/40 centimetres or so) square and done in watercolours. He himself was to be portrayed on an English horse, and carrying a spear or lance, while Shivaji was to be depicted as carrying a musket and dressed for the Silanghana (*simollanghana*, boundary crossing) rite of the Navaratri festival, a royal ritual that affirmed the king's territorial authority, and one that, like other rituals, had assumed renewed symbolic significance in the colonial era.[18] The portrait shown in figure 9, from the Government Museum, Chennai, is either a copy or the original of the Serfoji image in question, while I think that the equestrian portrait of Shivaji at the National Museum in Delhi is a copy or original of the other painting in this pair.[19]

A large oil portrait on canvas of Serfoji and Shivaji (figure 1), from the later part of Serfoji's reign, reflects both the changes and the continuities in Maratha portraiture. In this painting, Serfoji is seated at ease on a large, upholstered armchair, with a bolster behind him (a key feature of Maratha royal portraiture, the bolster represents rulership, *gaddi*), while Shivaji stands next to him, arms folded in a posture of obedience and service, yet paralleling the king in his frontal stance. Although the painting follows "Company style" conventions in the usual respects, father and son are naturalistically differentiated by their facial features, by the characteristics of age and physical girth, and also by the slight difference in their expressions. The sword hanging by Shivaji's side signals him as Serfoji's rightful heir.

9. Equestrian portrait of Serfoji II. Government Museum, Chennai. Photograph courtesy Simon Rasten.

The two European-style sculptures Serfoji commissioned testify to his interest in experimenting with new media and new modes of representation. In 1803, Serfoji commissioned a portrait sculpture in white marble from a pre-eminent neoclassical sculptor in Britain, John Flaxman (1755–1826), for a fee of £1,200.[20] Flaxman's statue (figure 10) is a portrait of the king in the English neoclassical-realistic style. Dressed in Maratha court dress, wearing a real sword at his waist, and a removable turban on his head, Serfoji stands with his palms joined in the Indian gesture of salutation and worship. In Serfoji's time, the sculpture was placed on the impressive granite slab on which the Nayaka throne once stood, in the old Nayaka Durbar Hall at the palace, where thousands must have viewed it with great curiosity, as they do even today. The Marathas used a different hall, the Maratha Durbar, for their public audiences, and so the other hall became an exhibition hall. This modern, European statue became the principal "public" face that the King showed, not only to every visiting dignitary, but also to a larger public.

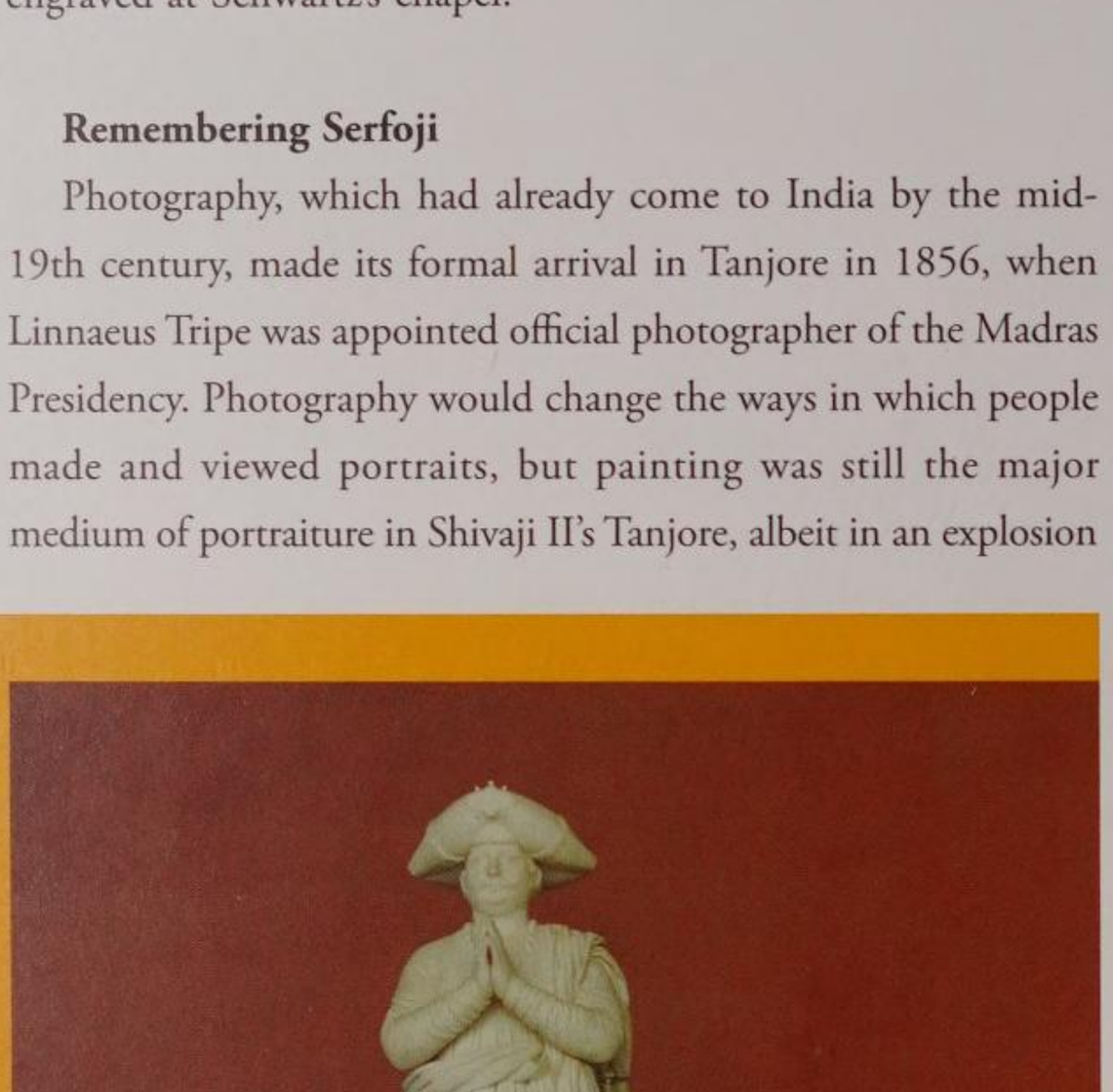
Already in 1801, Serfoji had commissioned through the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in London, a white marble memorial for Reverend Schwartz (d. 1798), also from Flaxman, who was famed above all for his memorial sculpture. Placed in the church within the Tanjore fort, the memorial (figure 11), in bas-relief, depicts the missionary on his deathbed, and Serfoji ministering to him.[21] Gericke, a fellow-missionary, stands behind the dying Schwartz. The faces of Schwartz and Serfoji form the centre of attention. The latter stands by his mentor's bed, with a sorrowful expression on his face, one hand placed tenderly behind Schwartz's head, and the other grasping his hand. The missionary is looking up at his ward with a loving, benevolent gaze. Two officials in Maratha court dress, one with a sword raised up in salutation, stand to the right, at the foot of the bed, and on the right foreground four little boys huddle sorrowfully together, representing the many poor and orphaned boys who were sheltered and educated by the missionary. Schwartz had been the

young Serfoji's teacher and surrogate father, and it seems entirely appropriate that the bereaved king should show his regard for his European mentor in marble, with its suggestions of refined sensibility and permanence, and in the sentimental idiom of the finest European neoclassical memorial sculpture. This is the only "narrative" portrait of Serfoji, and it is supplemented both by an inscription in memory of Schwartz engraved under the bas-relief and by the English eulogic poem written by Serfoji that was engraved at Schwartz's chapel.

Remembering Serfoji

Photography, which had already come to India by the mid-19th century, made its formal arrival in Tanjore in 1856, when Linnaeus Tripe was appointed official photographer of the Madras Presidency. Photography would change the ways in which people made and viewed portraits, but painting was still the major medium of portraiture in Shivaji II's Tanjore, albeit in an explosion

11. Marble relief, memorial to Reverend C.F. Schwartz, by John Flaxman, c. 1801, at Fort Church, Thanjavur. Photograph: Indira V. Peterson.



10. Statue of Serfoji II, by John Flaxman, c. 1803. Nayaka Durbar Hall, Thanjavur palace. Photograph courtesy John Fritz.

of new styles and techniques. In Shivaji's reign, court-sponsored royal portraits began to appear as permanent fixtures in public spaces in the palace, in public buildings, and at the Brihadisvara temple. In the Maratha Durbar Hall, the wall behind the space where the throne was placed is dominated by a large mural painting of Shivaji seated in state, with his ministers flanking him (figure 12) – a counterpart to the marmoreal presence of his father in the other hall.[22] Towards 1850, the public became acquainted with the faces of the Maratha rulers through the dynastic mural gallery commissioned by Shivaji at the Brihadisvara temple's Subrahmanya shrine hall. Among others, we recognize Serfoji on horseback, Tulajaji riding an elephant, holding an elephant goad (figure 13), and Sujanbai, the only Maratha queen to rule Tanjore, seated regally in a gilded chariot drawn by bullocks. These portraits, whose subjects are identified by names painted on the wall, are very much in the "Company style", but with the addition of painted architectural features, such as arches and pillars. The increasing visibility and publicity of royal portraits no doubt reflect the shadow of complete annexation by the British that loomed large over Shivaji's reign, accompanied by the increasing pace of the shift to modernity in the colonial public sphere, in which the court had increasingly to negotiate its own place.

12. Mural painting of King Shivaji II. Maratha Durbar Hall, Thanjavur palace. Photograph courtesy Cylla von Tiedemann.

And yet, Serfoji's face was stamped in public memory not through these colossal murals, but through smaller paintings done in the popular styles developing in the market, heavily gilded and gem-encrusted paintings, and small paintings on mica and glass. Older portraits of Serfoji and Shivaji were continually copied in the new, gilded "Tanjore painting" style, which catered mainly to the market for painted images of divinities such as the baby Krishna, to be worshipped. This popular style, which has been revived today, fully iconizes the Maratha rulers, especially Serfoji. In a sumptuous "Tanjore" painting depicting Shiva riding on his bull (Rishabhavahana), in the possession of the Maratha royal family, we see another variation on the Tanjore royal portrait, in the small, heavily gilded figures of Serfoji and Shivaji, portrayed standing on either side of Shiva, palms joined in worship.

13. Mural painting of King Tulajaji. Subrahmanya shrine, Brihadisvara temple, Thanjavur. Photograph courtesy of Prince Babaji Chhatrapati Bhonsle, Thanjavur palace.

The Victoria and Albert Museum possesses a small head-and-shoulders portrait of Serfoji, painted on glass, from the late 19th century.[23] The turbaned figure, portrayed smelling a rose, is identifiable as Serfoji only because of a generic resemblance to the much-copied face from other portraits of the king. The face is painted in simple, bold strokes and in vibrant colours, so that the entire image glows like a piece of Tiffany glass. In size, style, and effect, it is identical to another glass painting in the same collection, identified as a "dancing girl", also shown smelling a rose. In late 19th-century Tanjore, the art of popular portraiture levelled the distance between king and dancing girl, a shift that is entirely fitting in the case of a ruler who wished to change his world through the new learning, and a court that both initiated and enthusiastically participated in the public projects of modernity that surrounded it.

Notes

1. On portrait sculpture of the Vijayanagara-Nayaka eras, see T.G. Aravamuthan, *South Indian Portraits in Stone and Metal*, London, Luzac, 1930; T.G. Aravamuthan, *South Indian Portraits*, London, India Society, 1931; and Crispin Branfoot, "Royal Portrait Sculpture in the South Indian temple", *South Asian Studies*, Vol. 16, 2000, pp. 11–36.

2. William Hickey, *The Tanjore Mahratta Principality in Southern India: the land of the Chola: the Eden of the south*, Madras, Caleb Foster, 1873, reprinted Delhi, Asian Educational Society, 1988; and F.R. Hemingway, *Tanjore Gazetteer*, Madras, Madras Government Press, 1906.

3. Some of the portraits of Amar Singh may have been executed at the minor court in Tiruvidaimarudur to which he was forced to retire after Serfoji's accession in 1798. Amar Singh died in 1802.

4. See, for example, the murals on royal life at the Ramalinga Vilasa palace of the Setupatis of Ramnad, discussed in Jennifer Howes, *The Courts of Pre-colonial South India: Material Culture and Kingship*, London, Routledge, 2003.

5. Molly Emma Aitken, "The Practiced Eye: Styles and Allusions in Mewar painting", Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University, 2000, analyses the use of portraits in gift exchange at the Mewar court. Much has been written on such ceremonial circulation of portraits at the Mughal courts, including with European visitors (e.g., Milo C. Beach and Ebba Koch. *King of the World:*

The Padshahnama, London and Washington DC, Azimuth Editions Ltd. and Smithsonian Institution, 1997). Indian traders and agents at Calcutta, Surat, and other port centres were among the earliest to exchange portraits with Europeans (Susan S. Bean, *Yankee India: American commercial and cultural encounters with India in the age of sail (1784–1860)*, Salem, Peabody-Essex Museum, 2001).

6. Mildred Archer and Ronald Lightbown, *India Observed: India as viewed by British Artists 1760–1860,* London, Victoria and Albert Museum, with Trefoil Press, 1982, p. 32; Mildred Archer, Christopher Rowell, and Robert Skelton, *Treasures from India: The Clive Collection at Powis Castle,* London, National Trust, Herbert Press, 1987, pp. 132–33; and C.A. Bayly, ed., *The Raj; India and the British 1600–1947*, London, National Portrait Gallery, 1990, pp. 120–21. In 1777 Tulajaji commissioned a memorial portrait of his British benefactor, Lord Pigot.

7. George, Viscount Valentia, *Voyages and Travels to India, Ceylon, the Red Sea, Abyssinia and Egypt in the years 1802–1806.* London, F., C., & J. Rivington, 1811, 4 vols., vol. 1, p. 311. Similarly Archdeacon Robinson, who accompanied Bishop Heber to Tanjore in 1826, as cited in Hickey, op. cit., p. 115.

8. As reported by various European visitors, including the Reverend Claudius Buchanan, Bishop Middleton, and Bishop Heber, who visited in 1806, 1816, and 1826 respectively. See Hickey, op. cit., pp. 107–20.

9. Archer et al., 1987, op. cit. Lady Florentia Clive was the wife of Edward Clive, who was Governor of Madras, 1798–1803. Tonelli's sketch of Serfoji is reproduced in pl. 212.

10. Letter from Farrukhabad, March 23, 1821, Modi Documents Bundle 188.78.6A.I, Tanjore Palace Marathi Modi Records (in Tamil translation), P. Subramaniyan, ed., *Tancai marattiya mannar moti aavanat tamilaakkamum kurippuraiyum* (Tamil translations of and notes on the Modi Documents of the Maratha rulers of Thanjavur), Thanjavur, Tamil University, 1989, vol. 1, p. 518.

11. Archer, et al., 1987, op. cit., pl. 181.

12. Despatch from the Secretary of State for India, October 23, 1862, Article 5, quoted in Hickey, op. cit., p. cvii.

13. The anxiety of legitimacy can be read in the practice that the King seems to have initiated, of having his genealogy recited in the prologues of the Marathi dramas written and performed at his court, as well as in his commissioning of "The Narrative of the Bhonsle Dynasty", a genealogical text in Marathi, to be inscribed on walls in the Brihadisvara temple. See Indira V. Peterson, "Becoming a Chola Monarch in Nineteenth Century Thanjavur: The Maratha Ruler Serfoji II and the Brihadisvara Temple", paper delivered at the conference "The Time of the Cholas: 900–1300 C.E.", The University of California, Berkeley, April 22, 2006.

14. Titled "Raja Standing", Government Museum, Chennai.

15. See, for example, pl. 3 in Mildred Archer, *Company Drawings in the India Office Library*, London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1972; pl. 18 in Mildred Archer, *Company Paintings: Indian Paintings of the British Period at the Victoria & Albert Museum*, London, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1992; and pl. 134 in Andrew Topsfield, *In the Realm of Gods and Kings: Arts of India*, London, Phillip Wilson, 2004.

16. The two portrait ivories were given to the National Museum of Denmark by King Christian VIII of Denmark (b. 1786, r. 1839–48). I thank Simon Rasten of the Research Department of the National Museum for this information.

17. Serfoji did get an opportunity to meet the Governor General and convey his request that the British Government recognize the legitimacy of Shivaji's succesion to the Tanjore throne. See Indira V. Peterson, "Beyond Tanjore City Walls: Serfoji II's Improvisations on Kingship in his 1820–22 Pilgrimage to Benares", paper presented at the 31st Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Wisconsin, Madison, October 11, 2002.

18. A large equestrian painting of Serfoji in oils on cloth was recently restored and moved from the Orathanadu Muktambal Chattram resthouse to the Sarasvati Mahal Library Museum, where it is currently displayed (personal interview, P. Perumal, Conservator, Sarasvati Mahal Library, Thanjavur, December 2005).

19. National Museum, New Delhi, Acc. No. 77419.

20. Hemingway, op. cit., 1906, p. 2.

21. Christ Church, Fort, Thanjavur. For the history of the commissioning of the memorial, see Hugh Pearson, *Memoirs of the Life and Correspondence of the Reverend Christian Frederick Swartz*, Philadelphia, Perkins, Marvin & Co., 1835, pp. 378–83.

22. Large-size royal portraits on cloth or canvas were hung in the Maratha Durbar Hall until the 1970s, when most of them were destroyed in a storm, see K. Balasubramaniyan, *Colamantalattu varalaarru naayakarkalin cirpankalum oviyankalum* (Sculptures and paintings of leading figures in the history of Colamantalam), Thanjavur, Tamil University, 1987, pp. 298–99.

23. Glass painting was introduced to western India by Chinese artists in the late 18th century and became popular in Tanjore in the late 19th century (Archer, 1992, op. cit., pp. 191–92).

Hyderabad

150 Years of Court Paintings

ROSIE LLEWELLYN-JONES

In the first quarter of the 18th century, as the Mughal empire, once so brilliant a star, began imploding in on itself, a number of provincial rulers emerged to fill the vacuum created. Saadat Khan, Burhan-ul-Mulk and Mir Qamar-ud-din Khan, Nizam-ul-Mulk were two of the most significant.[1] Both men established themselves shortly after five of the great-grandsons of Emperor Aurangzeb had each gained and lost the Delhi throne within the two chaotic years of 1719 and 1720. Although their appointments came from Emperor Muhammad Shah (1719–48), and could in theory be rescinded by him, their posts soon became fixed and hereditary. Successive emperors, too busy with their own survival, left their appointees in place – Burhan-ul-Mulk as Subahdar, or Governor, of Awadh, and Nizam-ul-Mulk as Subahdar of Malwa. The Awadh dynasty dates from 1722 and two years later, in 1724, Nizam-ul-Mulk, appointed initially by the Emperor as Viceroy, established himself in the Deccan. He settled first in Aurangabad, and later moved to Hyderabad, which became the capital of the eponymous state. The succession to the throne of the Asaf Jahs, as the Hyderabad Nizams were named by the Emperor, was disputed after the death of its founder, but by 1762 the line of powerful men was re-established and continued unbroken until 1948.

1. Nizam-ul-Mulk, Asaf Jah I (r. 1762–1803) in procession, on a hunting expedition with General Raymond's French Corps, by Rai Venkatachalam, late 18th century. 126 x 194.04 cm. Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad, Cat. No. XXXV-17.

2. Procession of Nizam-ul-Mulk with standard bearer followed by General Raymond's French Corps and Mahlaqa Bai in a palanquin, by Rai Venkatachalam, late 18th century. 124 x 196.5 cm. Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad, Cat. No XXXV-6.

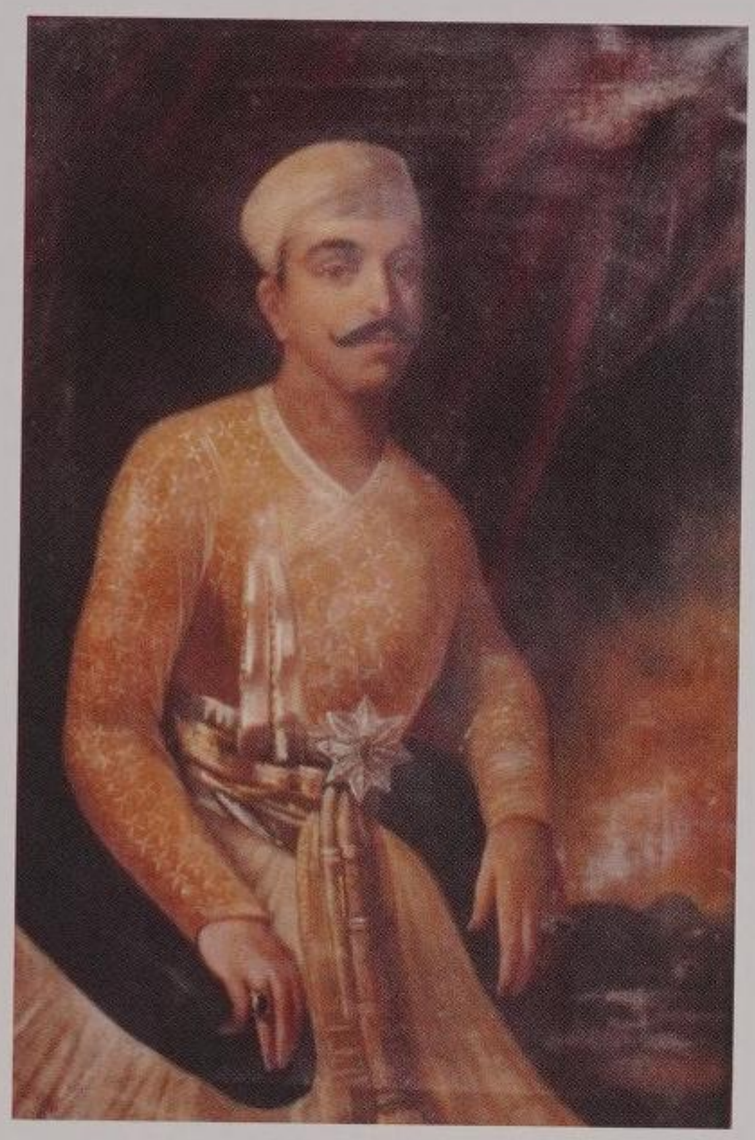
Paintings by Venkatachalam

There were initial similarities between the dynastic rule of the nawabs of Awadh and the nizams of Hyderabad. Although both claimed to be heirs to the Mughal empire, the nizams had the strongest case, for Nizam-ul-Mulk's title means literally Viceroy of the Country. Both beautified their capitals with lavish religious and secular buildings, and both had to deal with the emergence of a powerful new force in the political spectrum of 18th-century India, the English East India Company. British Residents were appointed by the Company to the durbars of Lucknow and Hyderabad and the Residents themselves were accommodated in suitably grand houses. Indeed the Residency at Hyderabad, when finally completed in 1806, was very like a small (British) palace, standing on the north bank of the River Musi. Another common thread was the employment of French mercenaries. While Awadh employed Colonel Jean-Baptiste Gentil, Hyderabad had the services of the dynamic General Michel-Joachim Marie Raymond, who arrived in Pondicherry in 1775 as a trader, but became a soldier of fortune. He worked first for Hyder Ali of Mysore, the father of Tipu Sultan, then moved to Hyderabad in 1785 to work for the Nizam, Mir Ali Khan, Nizam-ul-Mulk (r. 1762–1803).[2] He was appointed Controller of Ordnance by the Nizam and established modern gun foundries, as well as a regiment known as the French Corps. He died suddenly, aged 42, in March 1798, supposedly from poison and was buried in an extraordinary obelisk tomb in Hyderabad.[3]

Two paintings of hunting expeditions from the end of the 18th century show General Raymond's French Corps, his employer the Nizam on an elephant, and a prominent figure in a broad-brimmed black hat and red military coat who is presumably the General himself. These very large paintings, (each 126 x 195 cm, that is, just over four feet tall and six feet wide), hang today in the Salar Jang Museum in Hyderabad. (There was a third procession scene, now in a private collection in London.) All three paintings are attributed to Venkatachalam, the Nizam's favourite painter, who is said to have received a princely *jagir* or land grant of Rs 12,000 a year. But the Salar Jang pair of paintings are a puzzle. They are captioned as watercolours on paper, but observation shows the medium is probably tempera, that is, colour pigments mixed with egg yolk. Jagdish Mittal, a leading authority on Deccani art, believes that the paintings are on cloth and indeed horizontal folds, where the pictures were rolled up, as well as their size, seem to bear this out. The paintings are identical at first glance, designed to face each other on either side of a throne, or a doorway, but close observation shows a female figure in a palanquin emerging top right in one of them (figures 1 and 2). She is Mahlaqa Bai, the poetess of the Deccani court. Slight differences are seen in the shapes of the white flags carried on the leading elephants and the angle of some of the figures, but both paintings bear the characteristics of Deccani style – the three strong horizontal bands of figures processing from right to left, the flying white geese in the background, and the gorgeous golden sunset, shading into the blue of the night sky, and the green of the trees. Although off-centre, the Nizam, on a black elephant with an ochre-coloured cloth, stands in an empty space, marking him out from the jostling crowds around him. He is the reason for the procession, as well as part of it. His modern French Corps in their European red coats lead the hunting party, his traditionally dressed nobles accompany him, symbolizing a post-Mughal ruler who is aware of changing political fortunes, but who will not abandon the old, courtly rituals.

3. (facing page) Diwan Syed Abdul Qasim, Mir Alam, 1752–1808, by an unknown artist. 106.4 x 88.1 cm. Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad, Cat. No. LI-18.

This pragmatism stood the nizams in good stead when the East India Company sought subtly to test its authority by offering the title of "king" and a crown to a number of regional rulers in 1819. It found only one taker – Nawab Ghazi-ud-din Haider of Awadh. Nizam Mir Akbar Ali Khan, Sikander Jah of Hyderabad, sensibly turned down the offer and while Awadh disappeared as an independent kingdom in 1856, Hyderabad survived until 1948, a year after Indian Independence. Other important differences between the two states emerged, which can only be briefly summarized here. After the early demise of General Raymond, the Nizams did not seek to encourage other foreign adventurers, or indeed other foreigners. The British Resident, in his palatial house, was treated hospitably enough, and in the case of one notable Resident, James Achilles Kirkpatrick, who married Khair-un-nissa, the granddaughter of the chief minister, this attention was handsomely reciprocated.[4] But Hyderabad did not attract European painters. None of the "Company" artists who flocked to the Awadh court ventured south to the Deccan.



Lack of Fresh Inspiration

The dearth of European visitors meant that the innovative techniques and materials from the West, that revitalized the indigenous Lucknow School of painting, only filtered down slowly to Hyderabadi artists. However, there is one interesting link. The Englishman Richard Johnson, known as "Rupee Johnson" who commissioned and collected Indian paintings, was Assistant Resident in Lucknow in 1781–82 and later became Resident in Hyderabad from 1784 to 1788, where he continued to build up his magnificent collection, including the renowned Ragamala series. Mark Zebrowski, one of the first scholars to look closely at Deccani painting, believes that some of the architectural features in Richard Johnson's Ragamala series of paintings probably derive from European paintings in the Nizams' collections. As we will see in the portraits from the Salar Jang Museum, European styles clearly became popular, but there was no one of the status of Johann Zoffany, William Hodges, Ozias Humphry, the Daniells, Thomas Longcroft, or Tilly Kettle at Hyderabad, which almost certainly accounts for the static, unimaginative portraiture of the Nizams. Writing of traditional Deccani painting, Zebrowski noted the same lack of imagination here too – "Art lost its spirit during Sikander Jah's reign (r. 1803–29) just as the last relics of political independence were snatched away. The aristocracy continued to commission paintings throughout the first half of the 19th century, although subject matter hardly changes at all – alluring courtesans continue to enjoy the traditional refinements of life and versions of earlier Deccani paintings were commissioned – a deadly hardness has set in."[5]

There was an uneasy transition from the traditional way of depicting the nizams and their nobles to the European-style portraits that they felt progress demanded of them. An example is the painting of Syed Abdul Qasim, Mir Alam at the beginning of the 19th century (figure 3). He was Diwan, or Prime Minister to the Nizam, Sikander Jah. Here he almost faces the viewer, seated in a curiously embracing chair, with a draped red curtain behind him drawn aside to reveal a landscape at sunset. Clearly the trappings and the pose are Western, yet the perspective of the chair is oddly awry, as if the theory of European painting had been understood, but not put fully into practice. Two contrasting portraits of Diwan Ali Zaman Khan, Munir-ul-Mulk (1770–1832) also illustrate this awkward juncture. Munir-ul-Mulk came from the Salar Jang family, one of the most influential families in Hyderabad after the nizams themselves, who like the nizams established their own dynasty as hereditary diwans. (There were two other powerful families in Hyderabad, traceable from the early 18th century, and these were the Paigah nobles, who intermarried with the nizams, and the Peshkar family. In fact, one of the main differences between the courts of Lucknow and Hyderabad was that the Hyderabad nizams had men of much greater integrity, from these families, whom they could rely on.)

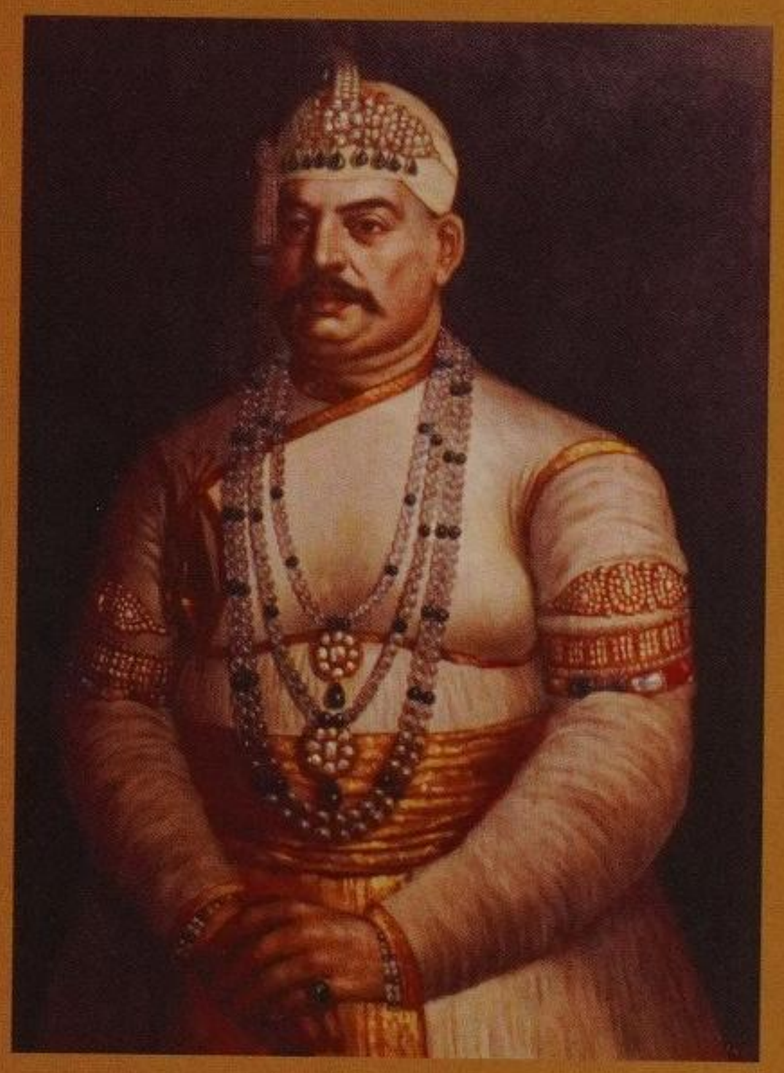
To mark his "accession" as Diwan in 1809, Munir-ul-Mulk commissioned a portrait, thought to be by Venkatachalam, which is dated about 1810. The Diwan is shown full length, in profile, against a pale green background, in a purple dress. Dark blue clouds float at the very top of the painting against an orange sky. It is a powerful image, that reflects a powerful man, as important in his own estimation as his master, the Nizam. An anonymous portrait of the same man in the Salar Jang Museum (figure 4) is in the European style. Here he appears, also in profile, and regally attired, but cut down in size, literally, as it is a three-quarter length view. (It is possible, of course, that the actual canvas has been cut, leading to the loss of his left hand.) He is still a striking figure, with that arrogant tilt of the head, but he is now without context. With no information about the artist we cannot date the portrait, or guess if it is contemporary, an original work by an unknown European, or a good copy by a local painter.

Hyderabad remained almost free of trouble during the Great Uprising of 1857 unlike its northern counterpart, Awadh. An attempt on July 17, to storm the Residency by a large party of armed Rohillas was put down by the East India Company's Madras Army, and the speedy arrival of two companies of European troops from the cantonment at Secunderabad caused the would-be rebels to flee. The Nizam Mir Farkhunda Ali Khan, Nasir-ud-daula who had ruled for nearly 30 years (1829–57) had died of natural causes exactly two months before the attack on the Residency. He was immediately succeeded by his 30-year-old son, Mir Tahniyat Ali Khan, Afzal-ud-daula (r. 1857–69) who remained hidden in the palace during the brief Uprising. He neither became the focus of rebellion, as Bahadur Shah Zafar did in Delhi, nor did he appear to aid the British, who managed the whole affair with their own men. When he subsequently had to pass sentence on the leader of the Revolt, Jamadar Turabaz Khan, he did so with the utmost reluctance, to the annoyance of his Diwan. The Nizam was said to suffer from "natural timidity, coupled with an hereditary dread of taking the life of any of his subjects…" so the Jamadar was sentenced to transportation for life.[6]

4. Diwan Ali Zaman Khan, Munir-ul-Mulk, 1770–1832, of the Salar Jang family. 105.6 x 87.06 cm. Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad, Cat. No. LI-19.

Nothing of his character is revealed in the portrait of Afzal-ud-daula and the almost identical portrait of his predecessor. Both show the same lumpish figure, facing the viewer, the sausage-like arms apparently screwed into the trunk. One has sideburns (Afzal-ud-daula), the other does not. Both pictures seem like caricatures of their sitters, but are more likely to be poor copies of better originals (figures 5 and 6). Compare these two freakish portraits with that of the Diwan Alam Ali Khan, Siraj-ul-Mulk of the Salar Jang family, and it is easy to see who had the better artist. Siraj-ul-Mulk was twice appointed Diwan (from 1846 to 1848 and 1851 to 1853). In this portrait the minister is an authoritative figure, armed with a red-sheathed sword and his left hand resting on the hilt of a dagger. Attached to his *kamarband* is a silver star-shaped decoration. Although the deterioration of the painting is clearly visible in reproduction, the flaking paint, the dirt, and the bloom on the canvas, the skill of the unknown painter has depicted a man more kingly than the Nizam (figure 7).

It was Mir Turab Ali Khan, Shuja-ud-daula, Mukhtar-ul-Mulk (1829–83), the nephew of Nawab Siraj-ul-Mulk and the grandson of Munir-ul-Mulk, who became the longest serving Prime Minister. Known as Salar Jang I, this astute and adventurous man started the art collection that today forms the bulk of the Salar Jang Museum holdings.[7] He was a great reformer who travelled to Europe and England, where he met Queen Victoria, and he is said to have begun his collection of Western art during one of these foreign visits. His grandson Yusuf Ali Khan, Salar Jang III (1889–1949) inherited the collection, adding considerably to it, buying antiques, art objects, and manuscripts from all over the world. The future connoisseur is shown at the age of six, in an oil painting by R. Bercovitch – an artist about whom nothing can



5. Nizam Nasir-ud-daula, Asaf Jah IV (r. 1829–57). Size not given. Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad, Cat. No. XLVII-149.

6. Nizam Afzal-ud-daula, Asaf Jah V (r. 1857–69). Size not given. Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad, Cat. No. XLVII-3.

7. Diwan Alam Ali Khan, Siraj-ul-Mulk (1809–53). Size not given. Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad, Cat. No. LI-1.

8. Yusuf Ali Khan, Salar Jang III (1889–1949), by R. Bercovitch, 1895. 79.8 x 59.2 cm. Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad, Cat. No. LI-6.

be gleaned apart from the fact that Bercovitch is a Russo-Jewish name. Almost certainly painted from a photograph, this is nevertheless a charming portrait of a little boy in his best clothes who has insisted on wearing his fashionable Western boots (figure 8). On his death in 1949, Salar Jang III left his treasures to the city. The paintings, from figures 3 to 9 reproduced here, are from the Founders Gallery on the ground floor of the Museum where, not surprisingly, there is a strong showing of men from the Salar Jang family.

Photography at the Hyderabad Court

According to Jagdish Mittal, European photographers were forbidden, or at least discouraged, in Hyderabad.[8] Some of the earliest photographs we have were published in 1862 by Allan Newton Scott in *Sketches in India Taken at Hyderabad and Secunderabad*. These are mainly of scenes that would appeal to an English audience, showing the Residency, the Protestant Church, and the Arsenal, and photographs of British officers in the Indian Army. Lala Deen Dayal, who had studied at the Roorkee Engineering College in northern India, was appointed the first official photographer to the Nizam Mir Mahbub Ali Khan in 1884. But this was nearly ten years after he had been appointed official photographer to Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy of India, and explains perhaps the persistence of the painted image in Hyderabad. In 1892 Lala Deen Dayal opened a Zenana Studio (for women only) in Hyderabad, which was supervised by the European wife of *The Times* correspondent. Curiously, although there was no objection to the royal women being photographed, as pictures from the Chowmahalla Palace Collection in Hyderabad show, they did not sit for painted portraits.[9] Perhaps the memory of the delightful Deccani houris in traditional paintings made it unseemly for a princess to pose for a painter and the association between the painted female image and licentious behaviour was still strong.

The Last Court Artists – The Deuskar Family

With the belated Nizami recognition of photography this might seem like the end of painting in Hyderabad. Mark Zebrowski has written that Lala Deen Dayal's appointment "created a taste for photography which effectively killed the moribund tradition of paintings".[10] But I found two huge oil paintings in Hyderabad, painted in 1937, which in their own way are as remarkable as the hunting processions of Venkatachalam 140 years earlier. The pair are called the Jubilee Hall Nazar Durbar paintings and they were commissioned by the Government of Hyderabad to mark the Silver Jubilee of the last nizam, Mir Osman Ali Khan (1886–1967, r. 1911–48).

These two works were painted by Sukumar Deuskar and his father Ramkrishen Waman Deuskar, who were

9. Nizam Mir Osman Ali Khan, Asaf Jah VII (r. 1911–48), by R.W. Deuskar, 1912. Size not given. Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad, Cat No. MS632.

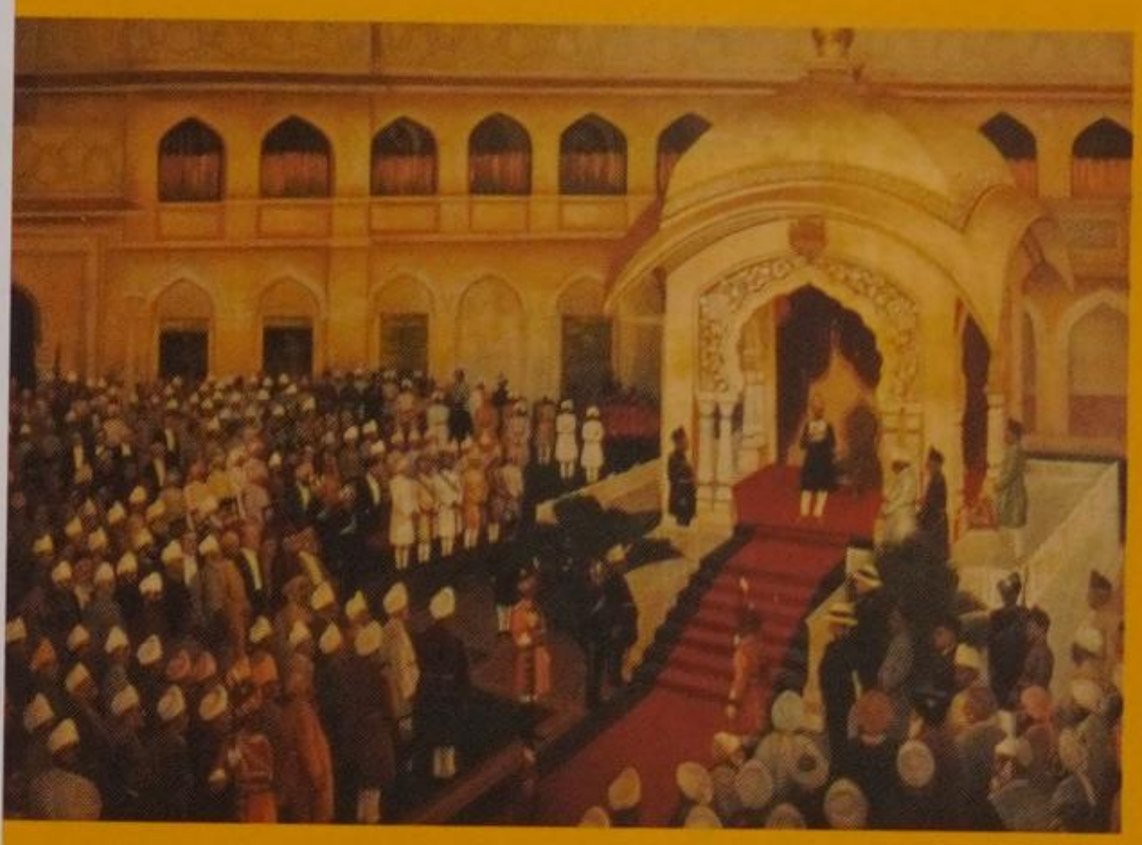
both artists employed by the Nizam, in fact they were the last court artists employed in India, although they both had other jobs. R.W. Deuskar was the first Curator of the Salar Jang Museum. He had studied at the Sir Jamsetji Jejeebhoy School of Art in Bombay and at one time he painted theatre curtains for Marathi drama companies. Indeed the scene in the Jubilee Hall paintings is very much a staged event, with a magnificent backdrop. Deuskar also painted the last nizam as a study in red (figure 9), the nizam's red sherwani complementing the theatrical background of column and red-carpeted stairs. The magnificent diamond *sarpech* (turban ornament) and armbands give dignity to the small figure, reputedly at this time the richest man in the world, although the huge lapis cufflinks are somewhat at odds with the rest of his jewellery.

R.W. Deuskar's son, Sukumar Deuskar (1901–52) graduated from Santiniketan, where Rabindranath Tagore discouraged painting in oils, because he considered it an intrusive Western medium. Sukumar later went to Europe to continue his studies and was caught up in the excitement of Paris in the 1920s. He had wanted to study at the Royal College of Art in Kensington, but was turned down, the Registrar telling him enigmatically, "Your style of painting is so formed that any further tuition would prove upsetting rather than beneficial to your work." On his return to India, he became Principal of the College of Fine Arts and Architecture in Hyderabad and was at one time an art director in the Bombay film industry.

The Deuskar family are of Maharashtrian and Bengali descent. Sukumar's daughter, Kavita Deuskar, who lives in Hyderabad, is an artist herself.[11] Her uncle, Gopal Deuskar is probably the best known of the Deuskar family and her great-uncle, who also studied in Paris in the late 19th century, married a French woman.

Sukumar Deuskar, who painted the Jubilee Hall pictures with his father, worked very quickly, which is fortunate, for according to his daughter, he was given only a few weeks to complete the huge commission. He painted the nawabs and nobles at the Durbar from life, not from photographs, getting them to come to the studio, in his house, for an hour's sitting each. Both Durbar paintings naturally have the Nizam as the focal point (figures 10 and 11). Apart from the fact that the courtiers and townspeople

10. Nazar Durbar I, by R.W. Deuskar and S. Deuskar, 1937. Size not known. Jubilee Hall, Hyderabad.



11. Nazar Durbar II, by R.W. Deuskar and S. Deuskar, 1937. Size not known. Jubilee Hall, Hyderabad.

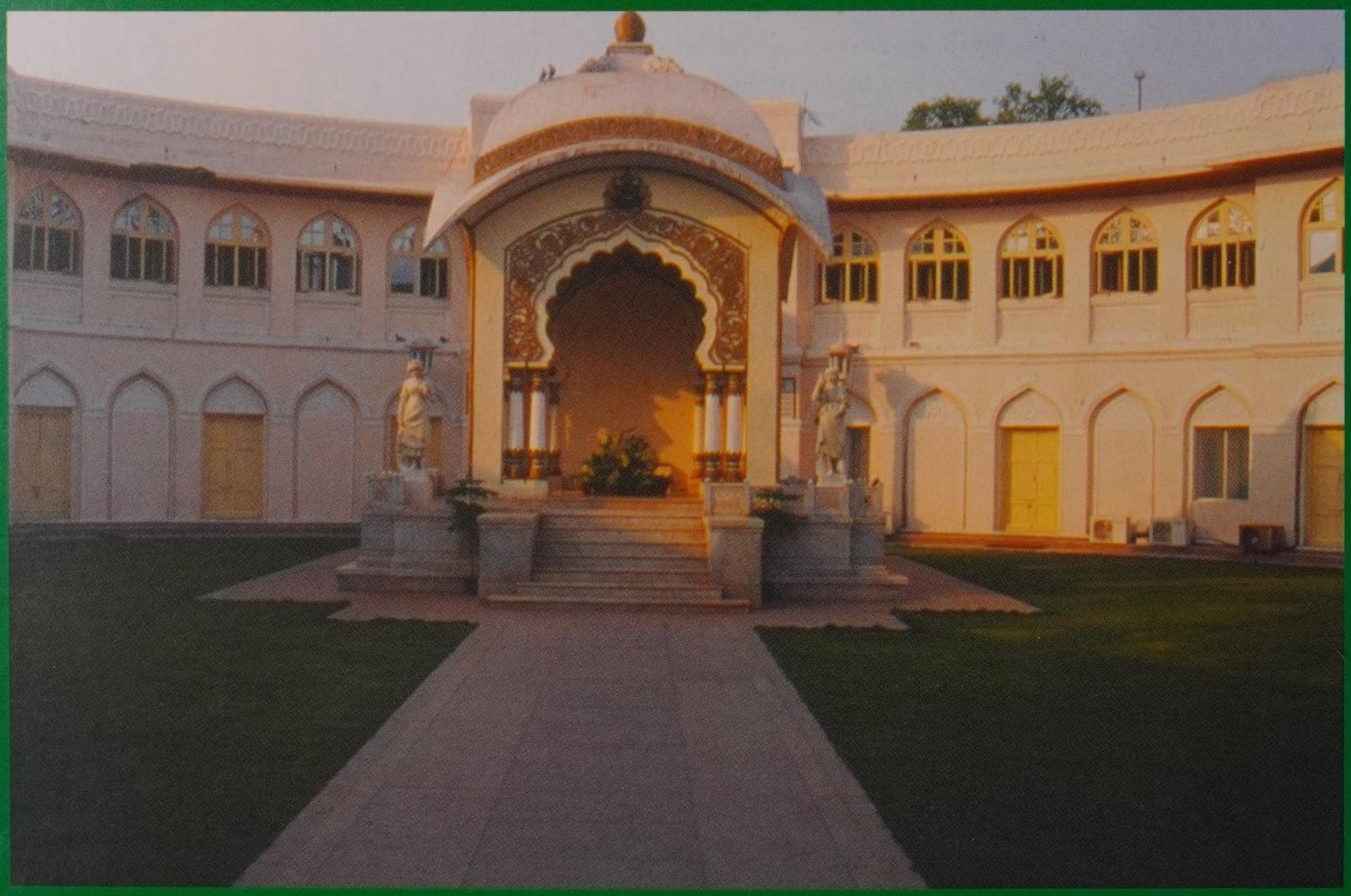
are in 20th-century dress, the composition of the paintings could have come from the Mughal court. Majesty is reflected outwards from the small figure of the Nizam, as *darshan*, and respect is reflected back from the crowd. The canopy under which the Nizam stood was later moved to the garden of the Jubilee Hall (figure 12). Sukumar Deuskar is also known to have painted a series of miniature portraits of the Golconda kings from ancient drawings, as well as the rulers of the Adil Shahi dynasty, which were commissioned by the Nawab Salar Jang III. The miniatures, about two and a half inches by three and a half inches (about

6.5 x 9 cm), were hanging in the Nizam's Chowmahalla Palace before the 1950s. He also copied favourite paintings for Salar Jang III.

One of the disadvantages, from the historian's point of view, of a dynasty like the nizams which survived into the mid-20th century, is that family paintings are still in private hands, and not on public display. There are clearly many still tucked away. The Faluknuma Palace, built by a Paigah noble in the late 19th century (though mercifully not in the over-florid style of the Paigah tombs), has a number of European-style portraits of the nizams and their courtiers in its basement, some in poor condition. When Lucknow was sacked after the Uprising, so much was lost, including paintings, that whatever is left today is doubly precious. While the Hyderabad portraits may not be of the same quality, there is certainly much more work to be done on them. A comprehensive catalogue from the Salar Jang Museum, and urgent restoration work on the portraits would be a start.

Acknowledgement

The illustrations for this essay could not have been obtained without the help of Oudesh Rani (Shanti) Bawa, and I am very grateful for her persistence.



Notes

1. Names of Muslim rulers at this period can be a trap for the unwary, who find two or more different names and assume that they are different people, rather than the proper name, title, and dynastic title of the same person. For example, the first nizam was Mir Qamar-ud-din Khan, Nizam-ul-Mulk, Asaf Jah I. "Mir" is an honorific, like "Sir", Qamar-ud-din Khan is his adult name (he would have been given another name as a child), Nizam-ul-Mulk is his title, literally Viceroy of the Country, and Asaf Jah I is his dynastic title. The last nizam, who died in 1967, was Asaf Jah VII.

2. There was a short interregnum between the first nizam, Asaf Jah I, who died in 1748 and the second nizam, Asaf Jah II, who came to the throne in 1762.

3. Within living memory commemorations were held at General Raymond's tomb on the anniversary of his death, with feasting and the retelling of old stories of his deeds. The tomb, platform, and "Grecian" temple, where lamps were lit, was restored recently and rededicated by the French Ambassador in India.

4. See William Dalrymple, *White Mughals: Love and Betrayal in Eighteenth Century India*, London, Harper Collins, 2002.

5. Mark Zebrowski, *Deccani Painting*, London and Berkeley, Sotheby Publications and University of California Press, 1983, p. 271.

6. Omar Khalidi, *The British Residency in Hyderabad: An Outpost of the Raj*, London, British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia (BACSA), 2005, p. 29.

7. See Vasant Bawa, *The Nizam between Mughals and British – Hyderabad under Salar Jang I*, New Delhi, S. Chand & Co. Ltd., 2nd edition, 1996.

8. Interview with Jagdish Mittal, Hyderabad, January 22, 2005.

9. See Rahul Jain, *Textiles of the Nizams,* Chowmahalla Palace, Hyderabad, 2005, p. 1 for a photograph of Mahal-e-Mubarak, wife of the last Nizam, wearing a *mukaish* dupatta c. 1915.

10. Zebrowski, op. cit., p. 245.

11. I am extremely grateful to Kavita Deuskar, who gave me two interviews on January 30, and February 1, 2005 in Hyderabad, and allowed me to look at her father's papers and photographs.

12. This canopy, now in the grounds of the Jubilee Hall, Hyderabad, only appears in the Nazar Durbar II painting, see figure 11.

Dressed for Success

Indian Princes and Western Symbols of Power

AMIN JAFFER

The writings of the English artist E.M. Merrick are rich with observations of the lives of Indian princes at the time of the British Raj.[1] As a portraitist, Merrick spent hours with her princely subjects and so was thus uniquely well-placed to scrutinize their manners and mores. As expected, her sitters paid considerable attention to the way in which they were represented, in some cases expressing a desire to be painted as to appear younger, more fair, and more richly jewelled than was really the case. The artist's memoirs reveal the penchant of some Indian princes for wearing articles of Western clothing. Anyone interested about the sartorial impact of the British empire on Indian rulers will find Merrick's encounter with the Maharani of Rewa especially revealing:

> I thought the old Maharanee was rather curiously dressed for an Indian lady, but she told me that when she was painted she wished to look like Queen Victoria, and had therefore dressed herself in English costume. She was wearing a purple pork-pie hat trimmed with three diamond stars, and a white veil covered with gold spangles hanging down the back; a purple velvet dress with a broad lace collar fastened by a large broach, and open sleeves lined with white satin and edged with a ruche. As the velvet dress was made quite tight, and it was ninety-five in the shade, she must have been extremely uncomfortable. She asked me if I did not think the dress very handsome, and, not liking to disappoint her, I said it was.[2]

The "Maharanee" was Appala Kondyamba, daughter of Vijayarama Gajapathi Raju, Maharaja of Vizianagram (r. 1845–79). Vizianagram was admired by the British for his liberal views, and for his command of English, which he spoke "as well as if he had been born and bred in the land, although he has never left India".[3] The Maharani's husband, Raghuraj Singh (r. 1854–80) was likewise fiercely pro-British and had assisted East India Company forces to quell uprisings during the "Mutiny", for which he was upgraded from the rank of raja to maharaja in 1857. Given the family history of "dosti London" or "friendship with London", it is hardly surprising the old Maharani should in her choice of dress so visibly seek to imitate Queen Victoria (r. 1837–1901).[4]

The Maharani was not the only Indian princess to do so. Following a visit to Balmoral, Rani Kanari, wife of Maharaja Sir Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala (r. 1890–1949), posed for a photograph in which she too dressed in Western clothes very much in the style of those worn by the Queen-Empress.[5] An official portrait of Sunity Devi, Maharani of Cooch Behar (r. 1863–1911), taken at the time of the coronation of Edward VII, reveals an even closer parallel with images of Queen Victoria, both in posture and attitude (figures 1 and 2). Sunity Devi had visited England for the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations in 1887, and had been warmly received by the royal family, winning the affection of Victoria herself and the friendship of her children and grandchildren. These ties were formalized, when, in 1888, the Queen agreed to act as godmother to Sunity's son, Victor. At the time of Edward VII's coronation in 1902 Sunity Devi was further honoured with the Imperial Order of the Crown of India, which she is sometimes shown wearing, along with other symbols of loyalty to the British Crown.

It is not surprising that in their choice of dress these princesses should emulate that of the Empress of India, the font of all authority and the source of legitimate power in the subcontinent. Following the suppression of the uprisings of 1857–58 and the collapse of the Mughal dynasty, the East India Company was abolished, and the British Crown assumed control of India, which it exercised either directly, or through the machinery of the subcontinent's numerous princely states. Years of centralized Mughal authority had created a deeply entrenched system of vassalage among the ruling families of Hindustan. The British Crown effectively maintained this order by adopting, to some extent, Mughal forms of tribute and homage. As a representative of the Crown, the Viceroy therefore held durbars, granted landholdings, affirmed or awarded titles, and observed court rituals such as distributing *paan* and sprinkling rosewater. In visual terms, the authority of the Viceroy, too, was partly represented in an Indian way, for although he wore Western dress, he was typically portrayed with attendants with *chauris* (flywhisks) and *morchhals* (fans of peacock feathers), two traditional attributes of Indian kingship.

The absorption of indigenous iconography and ceremony by the British reflected a broader governmental policy of inspiring loyalty among Indian princes and inviting them within the fold of the British empire. In "A Proclamation to the Princes, Chiefs, and the People of India", delivered in November 1858, Queen Victoria pledged to "respect the rights, dignity, and honour of native princes as our own".[6] Native states were thereafter treated as feudatories, carefully ranked and ordered according to importance. Those of high status were flattered with conspicuous ceremonial symbols such as gun salutes. The number of guns fired – which ranged from 3 to 21 – clearly announced a

1. (previous page) Maharani Sunity Devi of Cooch Behar. Photograph, 1902, Lafayette Portrait Studios. Victoria and Albert Museum (LAF 3305).

2. Queen Victoria. Photograph, 1887, Lafayette Portrait Studios. Victoria and Albert Museum (LAF 00080).

prince's status and his relative importance within the imperial system; the Queen-Empress herself was entitled to 101. Allegiances were further reinforced when, by the Royal Titles Act of 1876, Queen Victoria assumed the title of Empress of India. The bestowal of the title Empress bound the Queen closer to her Indian subjects, a relationship she took to heart, even to the point of learning Hindustani. For India's princes, her involvement added a personal dimension to the Raj, encouraging loyalty and fostering commitment to a royal figurehead. To commemorate the Act, Lord Lytton staged the first of a series of impressive durbars in Delhi, to which 90 leading princes were invited. The durbar formally incorporated the rulers into a larger British socio-political hierarchy. In visual and ceremonial terms, this was partly achieved through the awarding of armorial bearings. These had been designed by a Calcutta civil servant, Robert Taylor, drawing on information provided by the states themselves. Taylor's designs employed Indian symbols and imagery, but were configured according to the conventions of Western heraldry.

As was the case in Europe, in India coats of arms became central to the representation of princes. Emblazoned on the sides of carriages, or mounted as pennants on cars, they announced the elevated status of the bearer. As a signal of rank, coats of arms were rapidly applied to the paraphernalia of courtly life. Under Pax Britannica, India's princes ceased to actively rule. Foreign policy as well as other aspects of governance were determined by the British Crown, which conveyed instructions through a local Resident appointed to each court. No longer able to compete through conventional means of warfare and diplomacy, princes increasingly employed honorific symbols as a way of demonstrating power. Through the sheer number of impressions of bogus coats of arms which survive, it is possible to confirm that in British India armorial bearings carried considerable social and political authority. In formal Indian royal portraiture, coats of arms feature regularly, firmly indicating a prince's allegiance within a broader Western-dominated political system (figure 3).

A further system of honours was established for Indian princes in the form of membership to chivalric orders.[7] Orders were firmly rooted in the medieval culture of the West, in the spirit of chivalry and military brotherhood. Belonging to an order rested on a commitment to a cause and allegiance to an overlord. The emergence of military orders was closely linked to the protracted conflict between Christendom and Islamic kingdoms, specifically in the quest of the former to wrest the Holy Land from the "infidel". By the 19th century of course, military orders had become symbolic, with membership awarded as a favour or recognition of service and loyalty to the Crown. Dispensing orders also provided a convenient and highly conspicuous way of rewarding a subject without the commitment of bestowing a hereditary title or estate. As India was incorporated into the British empire new orders were invented to help bring Indians into the British political system and to win their loyalty. The Most Exalted Order of the Star of India was founded in 1861 in time to reward Indian princes who had stood by the British during the uprisings of 1857–58. In consideration for the faith of its members, the insignia was designed not in the shape of the usual cross but as a star. Membership was reserved for senior Indian princes and for the most high-ranking British officials, the purpose being to unite the ruling classes of the different races into a common group. Queen Victoria herself was appointed Sovereign of the Order, and the Viceroy of India assumed the post of Grand Master. The Star of India was complemented in 1877 by the less exclusive Most

3. Maharana Bhopal Singh of Mewar. Photograph, c. 1933, Lafayette Portrait Studios. Victoria and Albert Museum (LAF 13191).

Eminent Order of the Indian Empire, which carried the motto "*Imperatricis auspiciis*" ("Under the auspices of the Empress") and was intended to recognize the work of important Indian and senior British officials for long-standing exemplary service. To acknowledge the role of women of the Raj, in 1878 another order was created, that of the Imperial Order of the Crown of India, which included the Sovereign herself as well as wives of princes, notable Indian ladies, and wives of the most high-ranking British officials in India.

Membership to an order was typically bestowed with great ceremony. An observer recorded the investiture of the Maharaja of Jodhpur, conducted by Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, during his tour of India in 1875–76:

> First, the Maharaja of Jodhpoor was conducted from the tent in which he had been robed to the presence; the Under-Secretary bearing the insignia on a blue satin and velvet cushion. He was met at the entrance of the Chapter-tent by two junior Knights, and led up to the footstool of the Prince by Mr. Aitchison, who held him firmly by the hand, and indicated when he was to bow, kneel, walk backwards, and sit down. After the Queen's grant had been read, the Maharaja, having been decorated with a Knight's riband, badge, star, and robes, stood before the dais. He made two obeisances, and knelt. The Prince then placed the collar of the Order round his neck, and admonished him in prescribed form. Seventeen guns were fired. The Maharaja then rose, and, instructed by Mr. Aitchison, was led backwards, bowing with his face to the dais, towards the seat reserved for him. There his banner was unfurled to a flourish of trumpets, all standing. The Secretary proclaimed the titles of the newly-made Knight Grand Commander, and all resumed their seats.[8]

The underlying tone of vassalage cannot have been lost on any of the princes participating in such a ceremony. Obeisance and investiture were not, however, new to the chiefs and rulers of Indian kingdoms. Their ancestors had performed not dissimilar rituals at the Mughal court, where subordinates were regularly bound to the Emperor through acts of homage and the exchange of symbolic gifts. In particular it is worth noting that the mantle bestowed with a military order had a long-standing parallel in an Indian courtly context, where, in exchange for tokens of submission (*nazr*) superiors regularly awarded favoured subjects with ceremonial robes of honour (*khil'at*). Such garments carried a deep symbolic meaning, for they were considered to be an extension of the ruler himself and were thereby endowed with his authority and essence. By accepting and wearing clothes from the Emperor, the recipient subsumed himself within the mantle of the empire, accepting a role as subordinate.[9]

Such an attitude is clearly visible in a formal photographic portrait of Nawab Sultan Shah Jahan, Begam of Bhopal (r. 1868–1901), who is shown wearing the mantle, collar, sash, and insignia of the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India (figure 4). The image of the Begam clothed by the British Crown is curious; the substantial robes and medals envelop her small frame and the Western symbols of authority are out of keeping with her traditional headdress. Her clothes are themselves a composite, for she wears what looks like a *churidar,* under a frock or *kameez,* accessorized with Western-style shoes and gloves. While in the context of this photograph this fusion may appear incongruous, the cultural and symbolic cross-dressing is unremarkable when one considers the pro-British stance of successive generations of the rulers of Bhopal. The state had supported the British forces during the Anglo-Maratha Wars, and in 1817 signed a dependence agreement with the East India Company. During the uprisings of 1857–58, Sikander Begam (r. 1844–68) sided with the British, helping to crush the insurrection and re-establish British authority, for which she was made a Grand Commander of the Star of India. Her daughter, Shah Jahan was awarded this honour in 1872, four years after her accession to the throne, and it is probably at this time that she was photographed, aged 34. Her fixed gaze reflects deep convictions. The Begam had thrown off purdah at the death of her husband in 1868, developed into a serious patron of architecture, and became a poet who published in Urdu and Persian under different pen names.

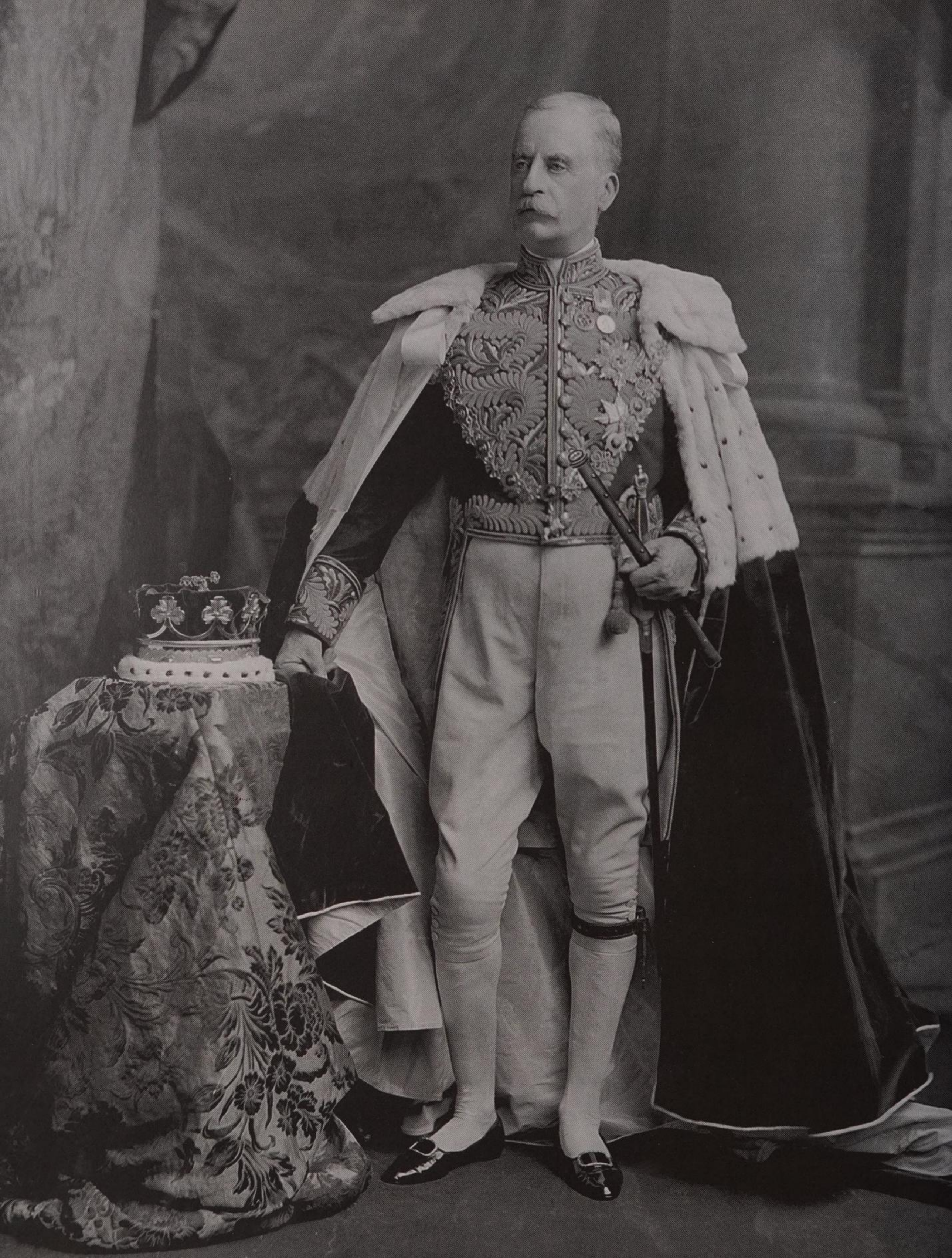
Even for the most stalwart pro-British princes, relations with the British Government were seldom straightforward. British policy itself was ambiguous and sometimes contradictory, particularly concerning the social and racial position of Indian

princes vis-a-vis the British in India and at home. In Europe Indian princes were received in royal circles, in which they freely socialized. But in India codes of racial segregation existed, so that in instances Britons of lesser status enjoyed privileges barred to elevated Indians irrespective of their rank. This dichotomy became more apparent as Indian princes received a Western education from which they were expected to think along Western lines without themselves becoming Westernized. In both matters of state and personal life their behaviour was regulated by London. The Crown endorsed or prevented marriages, approved or barred rights to travel, and ultimately bestowed and withdrew the right to sit on the throne. We find an example of this in the Maratha state of Indore. Maharaja Shivaji Rao (r. 1886–1903) was dethroned after hitting the British Resident.[10] Later, the Government forced his son Maharaja Tukoji Rao III (r. 1903–26) to abdicate, this time because he was implicated in a case of murder.[11]

Although Indian princes were increasingly inclined to wear Western-style clothes, on ceremonial occasions they were expected to appear in traditional style. The ruler of the south Indian state of Pudukkottai created an outrage when he requested permission

4. Begam Shah Jahan of Bhopal. Photograph, 1876, Bourne & Shepherd. Alkazi Collection of Photography, A.C.P. 97.15.0005-00135.

5. Maharaja Mahendra Singh of Patiala. Photograph, c. 1870.



to wear Western clothes at a Viceregal party, precisely the sort of event at which maharajas were meant to appear as splendid Oriental subjects of Empire. To avoid such situations, the Government specified in advance that on all state occasions native chiefs and rulers wear "proper Durbar dress". Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala was in line with Government policy, noting that "however much they may like to wear European clothes ordinarily", officially princes should appear in "national costume, particularly their national or tribal state head-dress".[12] By the late 19th century the concept of official dress was itself changing. A formal portrait of Maharaja Mahendra Singh of Patiala (r. 1862–76) shows that, although wearing a *choga* and turban, the ruler effectively modelled his clothes on Western court dress of the period, even down to his dress pumps (figure 5). He wears the insignia of a Knight Grand Commander of the Star of India, which he was awarded in 1870. His posture and bearing convey high rank and dignity according to European conventions of portraiture, and in political terms, the style of the Maharaja's portrait locates him in the same sphere as the Viceroy and the upper echelons of the British aristocracy (figure 6).

While the British Government happily bestowed titles and Western honours on Indian princes, they equally sought to make it clear that in no sense were maharajas on equal footing with European royalty. In official correspondence and documentation, Indian princes were increasingly described as "native chiefs and nobles", effectively depriving them of royal rank. From the late 19th century onwards, pains were also taken to ensure that Indian rulers did not assume any conspicuous symbols of Western power. Foremost of these was the arched crown. Metal crowns of various forms had of course been used in India, and can be seen, for example, on devotional sculpture.[13] Although metallic *mukut*s (crowns) continued to be used as ornaments on sacred sculpture, by the time that Europeans came to India the dominant form of headgear was the turban. In a princely context turbans were embellished with ornaments and jewels.

With the growth of British authority, some princely states adopted hybrid forms of headdress that clearly mirrored Western crowns.[14] This was above all the case in the princely state of Awadh, a former Mughal province, which was gradually wrested from central authority by its Iranian-born governor, Saadat Khan (d. 1739). As Mughal authority crumbled his descendants established hereditary control over the province, holding the title of "nawab" or deputy. While officially recognizing the Mughal emperors as their overlords, in practice the nawabs of Awadh behaved as autonomous rulers, until their encounter with the East India Company brought them into the sphere of British influence. Nawab Shuja-ud-daula (r. 1753–75) was defeated by East India Company forces in

6. James Hamilton, 2nd Duke of Abercorn. Photograph, 1902, Lafayette Portrait Studios. Victoria and Albert Museum (LAF 3391).

7. Purse with the Awadhi coat of arms. Lucknow, early 19th century. Silk and cotton with gold thread. Private collection.

8. Nawab Nasir-ud-din Haidar of Awadh. Lucknow, c. 1830. Pencil on paper. Private collection.

1764. The subsequent treaty established the Nawab as a British puppet bound to deliver the Company various forms of tribute, including paying for the upkeep of its troops stationed in Awadh. British dominance over the rulers of Awadh was such that in 1819 Nawab Ghazi-ud-din Haider (r. 1814–27) formally withdrew his allegiance to the Mughal emperor, and proclaimed his loyalty to the British, who elevated him to the position of king.

This assumption of royal rank was accompanied by a proliferation of royal paraphernalia. Robert Home (1752–1834), a pupil of Angelica Kauffman, was given the responsibility of devising the new king's regalia, as well as designing royal accessories such as carriages, howdahs, barges, and furniture.[15] Featured prominently

9. Sikander Begam of Bhopal with attendants. Photograph by James Waterhouse, 1862. Alkazi Collection of Photography, A.C.P. 98.72.0002.2-00071.

10. Crown, Lucknow, mid-19th century. Cotton, lined with velvet and embroidered with sequins, tinsel, seed pearls, and glass beads. Victoria and Albert Museum (IS 0348).

in these designs was a pair of fish, the symbol of the nawabs of Awadh, which were configured in the style of a Western coat of arms (figure 7). As extant portraits confirm, when dressed in state, the nawabs of Awadh wore Western-style pointed crowns, with an ermine cape, according to Western tradition (figure 8). Major Edward Archer visited Nawab Nasir-ud-din Haider (r. 1827–37) in December 1827 and observed that "On his head he wore a turban, formed something like a coronet, having round it a circle of precious stones, radiating into points: two rows of large pearls went round the top, and the whole was crowned with a plume of heron's feathers. His clothes were of cloth of gold, called kimkaub, and he wore a collar in imitation of that of the Garter. This was formed of three rows of large pearls, with emeralds in between, and separating the pearls into the form of links."[16] Their elevated title and conspicuous symbols of power did not ensure the survival of the nawabs of Awadh. By 1856 the East India Company concluded that they had outlived their usefulness. It deposed Wajid Ali Shah (r. 1847–56) and annexed the state outright.

Although the nawabs of Awadh were the only Indian dynasty to be formally raised by the British Government to rank of king, they were not the only ones to adopt Western-style crowns (figure 9). Noblemen in and around the state of Awadh adopted a form of headgear clearly based on arched crowns of the type found in the British regalia, but designed without the central motif of a cross.[17] These were made of cloth, richly worked and strengthened with metal threads, sequins, tinsel, pearls, and beads. Examples survive both in the Victoria and Albert Museum (figure 10) and in the Royal Collection.[18] The talukdars were landowners who had collected revenues on behalf of the nawabs of Awadh. Following the annexation of the State they were dispossessed, but ultimately reinstated by the British Government, who regarded them as a stabilizing influence in local government. Their existence depended on British support and it is understandable that in

11. Drawing for the Imperial Crown of Great Britain, worn by H.R.H. King George IV, designed and executed by Philip Liebart for Rundell, Bridge & Rundell & Co. England, early 19th century. Victoria and Albert Museum (D.400-1899).

12. Maharaja Rajinder Singh of Patiala. Photograph, c. 1890, Roli Books Collection.

asserting their claim to their estates, they emulated the trappings of power of their colonial overlords, including wearing Western-style crowns.

The rigid categorization of Indian princes from the late 19th century onwards was accompanied by a Government policy of ensuring that these rulers were visibly distinct and conspicuously inferior to the British royal family. This policy undermined the dignity of princes and was partly achieved by scrutinizing and regulating the symbols of rank which they employed. For example, in 1911 a Government memo noted how "the practice on the part of Indian Chiefs and Nobles of assuming emblems, etc., distinctive of royalty again showed a tendency to increase". Orders were issued to check this trend. Officials were asked to pay particular attention to those rulers who employed "any form of arched crown that resembles or is liable to be mistaken for the Royal or Imperial British crown" (figure 11). Princes overcame this obstacle in various ways. Members of the royal house of Kashmir, for example, simply wore tiaras over their turbans, thus simulating the glitter and regal effect of a crown without technically crossing governmental policy, a style also used by Maharaja Rajinder Singh of Patiala (r. 1876–1900; figure 12).[19] Other princes flagrantly crossed Government policy. A contemporary report reveals that at a durbar in 1912 Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala (r. 1900–38) "wore a diamond crown made in England, just like the crown of European kings. He wore it without a pugree or turban just like a king. This is new departure in Patiala. The crown is worth 20 lakhs and most of the old gems are set up in it. All the Sikhs both of old and new schools do not like the Maharaja's appearing without a turban and are displeased."[20] Sayaji Rao III, Gaekwad of Baroda (r. 1875–1939), also commissioned a crown in Europe, from the Parisian jewellers Cartier, but after years of negotiation over the design, ultimately cancelled the order, probably knowing that he would not be allowed to wear the piece.[21]

The Government caveat was aimed not only at the headdress worn by princes, but the representation of ambiguous crowns on stationery, royal objects, flags, and pennants.[22] In the 1920s the rulers of Kapurthala, Dhar, Nabha, and Rampur were all under attack since on their letterhead they used crowns "closely resembling the Royal Crown of England".[23] The Government

also tried to stop princes from distributing Western-style medals and establishing their own orders based on European examples. Although a compromise was reached on this subject, and rulers were finally allowed to award medals, these could only be given to their own subjects and could not "clash or compare" with honours or orders granted by the Crown.[24]

Western symbols of power played an important role in the representation of Indian princes during the British Raj. In princely portraits coats of arms, medals, orders, and articles of European dress all suggested achievement in the new, British-dominated India. The Crown recognized that the most effective way of securing the loyalty of Indian princes was by integrating them into a broader British empire. This was achieved partly by awarding princes Western honours and by teaching them to think and live along Western lines. Maharajas accepted the pre-eminence of the British monarch, and in their own portraits typically adopted symbols that suggested a proximity to this ultimate source of power. While encouraging princes to adopt a Western outlook, the Government equally tried to ensure that maharajas respect the unique visual attributes of British kingship and created regulations that barred Indian princes from assuming symbols that might suggest that they possessed sovereign rights. As an order of 1912 explains, princes were barred from doing anything that "might create the impression that there can be any fountain of Imperial honour other than the King-Emperor and his representative".[25]

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Deepika Ahlawat, Rosemary Crill, Sharada Dwivedi, and Pramod Kumar for their assistance, and would like to acknowledge the help of the Victoria and Albert Museum, the British Library, the Alkazi Collection, and Roli Books for providing images.

Notes

1. I would like to thank Sharada Dwivedi for bringing Merrick's work to my attention.

2. E.M. Merrick, *With a Palette in Eastern Palaces*, London, 1899, pp. 138–39.

3. W.H. Russell, *The Prince of Wales' Tour: A Diary in India,* London, 2nd edition, 1877, p. 320.

4. Charles Allen and Sharada Dwivedi, *Lives of the Indian Princes,* London, 1984, p. 83.

5. E. Jaiwant Paul, *The Unforgettable Maharajas,* Delhi, 2003, p. 60.

6. A. Berriedale Keith, ed., *Speeches and Documents on Indian Policy, 1750–1921,* no publisher given, London, 1922.

7. Bernard S. Cohn, "Cloth, Clothes, and Colonialism: India in the Nineteenth Century", in Annette B. Weiner and Jane Schneider, eds., *Cloth and Human Experience,* London and Washington, 1989.

8. Russell, op. cit., pp. 374–75.

9. Cohn, op. cit., p. 313.

10. Allen and Dwivedi, op. cit., p. 248.

11. Allen and Dwivedi, op. cit., p. 249.

12. Sir Jagatjit Singh, GCSI, GCIE, Maharaja of Kapurthala, *My Travels in Europe and America, 1893,* London, 1895, p. 106.

13. See for instance, Pratapaditya Pal, *Indian Sculpture,* vol. 2, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1988, cat. 111.

14. See for instance the crown worn by Bahadur Shah II in a painting dated AH 1254 (1838), illustrated in Amin Jaffer, *Furniture from British India and Ceylon,* London (V&A), 2001, p. 117.

15. British Library, Mss. Eur. Photo 331, p. 273. On this subject see Jaffer, op. cit., pp. 302–03.

16. Major Archer, quoted in Joachim K. Bautze, *Interaction of Cultures, Indian and Western Painting 1780–1910,* Alexandria, Virginia, 1998, p. 100.

17. See for instance, Lal Achal Ram, Ta'luqdar of Birwa, in *An Illustrated Historical Album of the Rajas and Taaluqdars of Awadh,* Allahabad, 1880.

18. The Royal Collection crown is especially richly worked, embellished with diamonds and pearls and decorated with the royal coat of arms and the Garter motto *Honi soit qui mal y pense* (Shame on him who thinks ill of it). It was commissioned by the talukdars of Awadh as a present for Edward VII in 1876 during his tour of India as Prince of Wales. *Royal Treasures, A Golden Jubilee Celebration,* Royal Collection, London, 2002.

19. Paul, op. cit., p. 25.

20. OIOC R/1/1/1105.

21. Judy Rudoe, *Cartier, 1900–1939*, exhibition catalogue, London, 1997, p. 35.

22. OIOC R/1/4/239.

23. OIOC R/1/4/239.

24. OIOC R/1/1/477, pp. 1–3.

25. OIOC R/1/1/477, pp. 1–3.

Dazzling Baubles

Gems and Jewels in Princely Portraits

USHA BALA KRISHNAN

A woman decided to have her portrait painted. She told the painter of the commission, "Paint me wearing diamond rings, a diamond necklace, emerald bracelets, a ruby brooch, and a gold Rolex."

"But you aren't wearing any of those things," the painter replied.

"I know," the woman said. "It's in case I should die before my husband. I'm sure he will remarry right away, and I want his new wife to go crazy looking for the jewellery."

Peering through dust and grime at sculptures in temples and museums, poring over miniature paintings with magnifying glasses, or examining in minute detail a 19th- or early 20th-century photograph, historians of Indian jewellery, like the "new wife", often go crazy looking at and hunting for the fabulous jewels that are carved, painted, or captured by the camera lens.

Until the 19th century, sculptures, paintings, and references in texts and court chronicles were the only sources for the study of Indian jewellery. The veracity and reliability of the exquisite carvings rendered in the plastic arts and the eloquent descriptions in literary texts have always left room for doubt. Archaeological examples of really old jewellery in India are rare. From one generation to the next, gems and precious metals were recycled into new ornaments. Jewellery and gemstones were easy to carry, and in times of war served as ready cash to buy loyalty, recruit troops, or bribe the enemy.

Throughout history, literature and the plastic arts corroborate that owning precious gems and jewels has been the prerogative of monarchs. More than in any other culture in the world, this privilege reached immeasurable proportions in India. In the ancient world, India symbolized endless wealth. For more than 2,000 years, the Deccan plateau was the only source of diamonds in the world. Gem dealers, merchants, and fortune hunters flocked to India seeking Golconda diamonds as well as sapphires from Kashmir, rubies and spinels from Burma, Colombian emeralds, Basra pearls, and gems from Ceylon, that were traded in gem bazaars around the country. Literary accounts are replete with stories of snake-infested valleys filled with diamonds and naked kings dressed in loincloths fringed with rubies, emeralds, and sapphires. Awestruck visitors, who described inconceivable opulence and kings adorned with gems as big as walnuts, chronicled the fairy-tale courts of local rulers.

Sir Thomas Roe, the British ambassador to the Mughal court in the 17th century, was taken aback by the vision of Emperor Jahangir that greeted his eyes. He records in his diary that the King walked in "...clothed, or rather laden, with diamonds, rubies, pearles, and other precious vanities, so great, so glorious: his sword, target, throne to rest on correspondent; his head, necke, breast, armes, above the elbowes, at the wrists, his fingers every one with at least two or three rings, fettered with chaines, or dyalled diamonds, rubies as great as walnuts (some greater), and pearles such as mine eyes were amazed at."[1]

Mughal miniatures corroborate such descriptions of wealth. Court ceremonies and royal portraits offer an accurate, though idealized, glimpse into a world of opulent splendour. Akbar, Jahangir, and Shah Jahan were portrayed adorned with fabulous jewels and accoutrements of rank. Exceptionally valuable gems were handed down from father to son, acquiring a dynastic significance. These were prominently worn as pendants, sometimes as armbands, or more frequently as turban ornaments – the distinctive emblem of royalty. Paintings illustrate emperors giving jewels as gifts and receiving tribute in the form of gems and ornaments. However, representation of jewellery is fairly standardized. Although the use of colour permits an identification of the type of gems that were used, the limitations of the medium and the scale of the paintings did not allow for distinguishing details of design.

Towards the middle of the 19th century, miniature artists were increasingly concerned with portraiture and the life of the ruler. They sought to survive amidst the growing threat of rival art forms, such as oil painting and photography. In a short span of time, the portrait painter, who in turn was replaced by the photographer, supplanted the miniature artist. The painting of Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Marwar (figure 1) dating to c. 1880, is still in miniature format though the "hyperrealistic"[2] likeness of Jaswant Singh has a strikingly photographic quality to it. This is apparent in the immediacy of the sitter, and the typical studio setting comprising a floral carpet, chair, and table with vase of flowers and leather-bound book.

1. (previous page) Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Marwar-Jodhpur. Attributed to Narsingh, Rajputana, c. 1880. Opaque watercolour on paper. The Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Mr and Mrs Robert L. Poster, 87.234.6.

The period to which the painting dates was one of political transition. Divested of their powers by the British and with Independence appearing on the horizon, the portrait captures a make-believe world of pomp and wealth that the royals were reluctant to renounce on the one hand, and the ethos of the Victorian gentleman that they strived to emulate, on the other. It is manifest in the regal bearing of this proud Rajput warrior-king seated in a Western-style chair wearing leather

riding boots and jodhpur trousers with a traditional Indian *jama* and turban. But what is striking is the impressive Marwar family emerald necklace around his neck. More than any other single element in the portrait, the ornament unequivocally proclaims Jaswant Singh's lineage, the wealth of the Marwar state, and his divine right to rule.

Made up of Colombian emerald beads, perfectly matched for colour, size, and quality, this priceless necklace today endures only in royal portraits. From the 1580s, when the Muzo and Chivor mines of Colombia were discovered, emeralds poured into India via the Portuguese-Spanish trade through Goa and the Deccani ports. The maharajas were passionately fond of the green gem – an obsession they acquired from their Mughal predecessors. No longer worn, or even seen, the Marwar emerald necklace, like countless other emerald-set jewels, has in all likelihood been sold or broken up into smaller pieces of jewellery.

With the growing importance of British power in India in the 19th century, portrait painting emerged from the miniature format and found expression in the graceful realism of oil paintings. British and Indian artists sought the patronage of the native courts. They were commissioned to render larger-than-life canvases to adorn the walls of magnificent palaces. The most renowned Indian artist of this medium was Raja Ravi Varma (1848–1906). No longer hampered by the limitations of the miniature format, Ravi Varma's dazzling oil paintings and oleographs captured in vivid detail contemporary colours, textures, costumes, and above all the jewellery of his subjects. Ravi Varma's patrons were the leading royal houses of the day – Travancore, Hyderabad, Baroda, Gwalior, and Mysore, whose rich attire and heirloom jewels are captured for posterity in layers of shimmering oils.

Mass-produced oleographs like the one of Krishnaraja Wadiyar the Maharaja of Mysore and his Maharani (r. 1902–40) (figure 2) served the purpose of popularizing the King to his subjects. These oleographs were available for purchase and were used in very much the same manner in which official photographs of present-day politicians adorn the walls of government buildings and corporate offices. The Maharaja and his wife are traditionally attired and stand in front of an elaborately decorated wedding pavilion. The gold brocade of the textiles glimmer and strings of pearls, interspersed with diamonds and emeralds, emerge in

2. Krishnaraja Wadiyar, Maharaja of Mysore, and his Maharani. Oleograph by Raja Ravi Varma, early 20th century. Private collection.

3. Ear ornaments. South India, late 19th/early 20th century. Gold set with rubies, diamonds, emeralds, and pearls. Private collection. Photograph: Bharath Ramamrutham.

4. Belt. South India, early 20th century. Gold set with Burmese cabochon rubies, emeralds, and diamonds. Private collection. Photograph: Bharath Ramamrutham.

vibrant colour from the two-dimensional surface. The ear jewels and belt worn by the Maharani and the impressive diamond-set necklaces and pearl garlands, worn by the Maharaja, were typical of the period (figures 3 and 4). For the first time, designs can be positively ascertained.

From earliest times, the portrait has been considered a means to immortality. Through the ages, the reigning monarch had his likeness imprinted on coins, seals, rendered in sculpture, paintings, and on canvases. Photography was the culmination of this historical development. To the rulers, photo-portraits were idealized images of themselves in very much the same manner that a Gupta king struck his likeness on coins. By the early 20th century, the court photographer had replaced the court painter.

Photography as a research tool for the study of jewellery styles is invaluable. Here, we are not concerned with the deeper emotional interpretations of these portraits but the embellishment of surface. These incredibly beautiful and hauntingly poignant bejewelled images freeze a moment in time. What is captured is "real". The jewels existed at one time and the wealth of India's princes is there for all to see. Photo-portraits are historical documents. The time frame to which they belong – the second half of the 19th to the early 20th century – is significant. While on the one hand they display the pomp, majesty, and wealth of royal life, they also tell us an entirely different story. When viewed in the context of the moment in which they were taken, they reflect the pathos of a state of affairs wherein the throne was occupying two different worlds. The sitter had the divine right to rule but was divested of all powers by the British. Through the lens these royals look out at an India emerging into freedom. Adorned with splendid jewels and physical accoutrements of power they seek to cling to supremacy in their kingdoms. The princes lived in isolated feudal enclaves cocooned in luxury that was almost surreal and fictional. Their colourful and magnificent world was a subject of enduring fascination to photographers. Images abound of majestic European-style palaces rising mirage-like from the arid Indian countryside; portraits of rulers with European visitors showing off a tiger kill; state portraits of kings dressed in military uniform proclaiming their rank in the British Army; and solitary images in traditional Indian attire dripping with extraordinary jewels, as if legitimizing claims to celestial origin.

The British writer Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) contemptuously stated that God created the maharajas of India for the sole purpose of offering mankind a dazzling spectacle of jewels and marble palaces. But to the Jahangirs and Shah Jahans, the Wadiyars and Gaekwads, the Singhs and Holkars of India, displays of enormous wealth were credible affirmations of imperial might. Gem-encrusted thrones, magnificent turban jewels, and a cascade of diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and pearls from neck, arms, and waist proclaimed royal status. The best gemstones and the most fabulous ornaments were reserved for the men. Few outside the immediate coterie and the inner circle of the trusted family were permitted to view royal jewels.

In 1947, as British rule over India came to an end, there were more than 600 princely states scattered all over the country that were integrated to form the Union of India. There were Rajas and Maharajas, Nawabs and Thakurs, a Nizam, a Jam, a Maharawal, and scores of Raos and Ranas. In return for acceding to the Indian Union the princes received tax-free privy purses and ownership of vast private properties, including their palaces. The Government of India made no claim on personal jewellery since the integration of physical boundaries was of immediate urgency. Since ancient jewels were as much a part of the Indian heritage as magnificent palaces and vast tracts of land, it was agreed that "such ancestral jewellery as was 'heirloom' was to be preserved for the ruling family; and valuable regalia would remain in the custody of the ruler for use on ceremonial occasions".[3] Jewels provided an easy and secure way to hoard portable wealth in the face of diminishing power and political instability. Astute and perceptive, none of the rulers included valuable "heirloom" jewels or state regalia (jewels that were to be held in trust for the nation) in the lists of assets they submitted to the Government.

Magnificent jewels and gemstones were locked away in safe deposit boxes, no longer relevant as symbols of imperial might and definitely not to be flaunted as statements of material wealth in a free, democratic, and socialist state. Over the next two decades, the lot of the erstwhile rulers changed. The Government of India abolished their titles in 1969 and discontinued their privy purses in 1971. The princes were reduced from divine sovereigns to mere citizens. In a short span of time, they were compelled to come to terms with the loss of their vast revenue-bearing properties and

become accustomed to earning a living. To sustain their lavish lifestyles they turned to the riches in their treasuries. Jewels were the first to be liquidated.

In the 1960s and '70s India became a hunting ground for gem dealers and collectors who travelled through the country buying gems and jewels from rulers eager to encash idle wealth. To camouflage their provenance, countless ornaments were broken up and gems were re-cut to obliterate their identity.

But the beauty and magnificence of these dazzling baubles have endured in photographs. In fact, portraits of bejewelled rulers and their spouses captured in life are all that remain of the jewels. Most of these photographs were official state portraits intended to convey the moral right of the sovereign and the heirs apparent to rule, and were targeted at the British Resident. Rare photographs of royals showing off their jewels to visitors and emancipated maharanis adorned with rock-like diamonds have survived as sole testimony to the imperial treasuries of the native states. These photographs evoke memories of wealth, of prevailing fashions, of the influence of the ateliers of Paris and London, and the shifting fortunes of dynasties.

The frail yet dignified demeanour of Maharaja Yadavendra Singh of Patiala (1913–74) (figure 5), his haunted, lonely eyes gazing out into the distance, conveys an apparent resignation to changing times and circumstances. The incongruous Western-style tiara instead of the traditional *sarpech* on the turban is typical of the prevailing ethos. Straddling East and West, the maharajas desperately clung to their thrones subjugated by their British masters; they maintained huge harems and held pompous durbars yet postured as impeccable Victorian gentlemen attired in tailored suits.

However, posterity and immortality lie at the core of Yadavendra Singh's portrait. He showcases the Patiala treasury assiduously amassed by his great grandfather Mahendra Singh, his grandfather Rajinder Singh, and his father Bhupinder Singh. The tiara, undoubtedly made in India, is set entirely with diamonds and was created for Rajinder Singh. Two rows of faceted diamond amulet-shaped beads are draped around his turban; pearl and diamond drops adorn his ears. Close around his neck rests the diamond necklace that once belonged to Empress Eugenie of France and was purchased by Mahendra Singh; but one of the

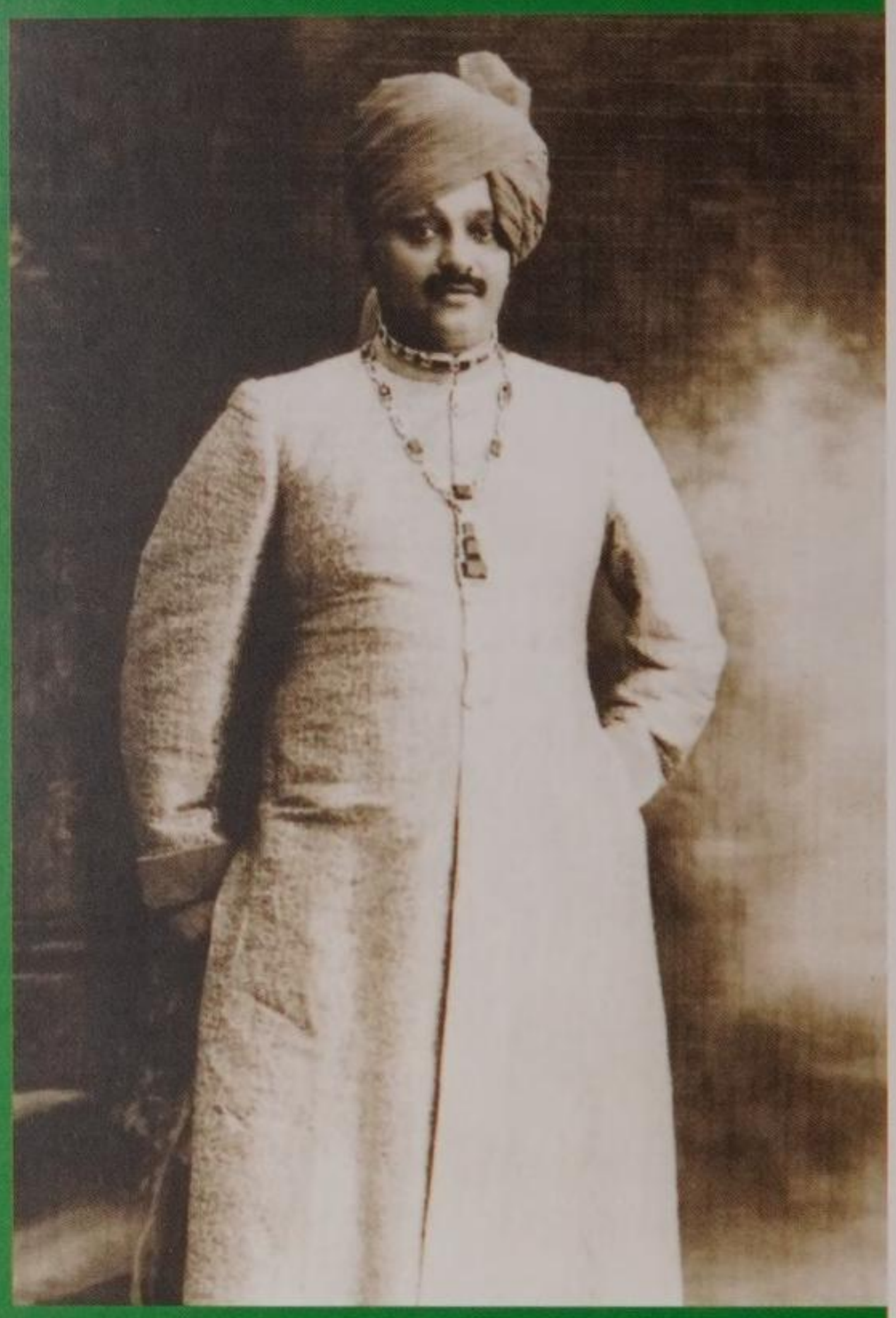
5. (facing page) His Royal Highness Maharaja Yadavendra Singh of Patiala. He is wearing the necklace set with the De Beers diamond, created by Cartier in 1928. Archives Cartier © Cartier.

6. Necklace of the Maharaja of Patiala, Cartier, Paris, special order, 1928. Platinum re-set with old and rose-cut diamonds (chain and links), one cushion-shaped yellow zircon, four white zircons, thirteen white topazes, two synthetic rubies, one smoky quartz, and one citrine. N. Welsh, Cartier Collection © Cartier.

most spectacular pieces of jewellery ever made is the legendary Patiala necklace with the De Beers diamond, that cascades down his chest.

In 1928 Bhupinder Singh commissioned Cartier to create a magnificent five-row ceremonial necklace shaped like a bib, set with spectacular coloured diamonds and the De Beers diamond as the centrepiece. The De Beers, a 234.5 carat yellow diamond, was one of the largest polished diamonds in the world. It had been purchased by Rajinder Singh in Paris. Photographs of Bhupinder and Yadavendra Singh wearing the necklace on state occasions and during royal durbars have immortalized the jewel. After India's Independence in 1947, the necklace was no longer worn or seen and ostensibly disappeared.

Fifty years later, in 1998, the necklace surfaced in London. It had only its five platinum chains



7. Portrait of the Jam Sahib of Nawanagar, Sir Digvijaysinhji Ranjitsinhji Jadeja Bahadur (1895–1966). He is wearing the Cartier necklace created for his father Ranjitsinhji in 1926. Archives Cartier © Cartier.

and was devoid of the 2,930 gems it had originally been encrusted with, including the De Beers. The necklace was purchased by Cartier and recreated using cubic zirconium and synthetic rubies (figure 6). Seen in conjunction with photographs of the Patiala rulers wearing the original necklace, the jewel endures in all its glory, albeit devoid of the original diamonds.

Almost without exception, every Indian princely state once owned jewels purchased from Cartier or designed by the firm. Notable pieces included the emerald tiara made for Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala, an entire collection of crown jewels for Patiala, jewels for the Holkars, the Jaipur maharajas, and countless other native princes. In a photograph dating to the 1930s Digvijaysinhji of Nawanagar (figure 7) wears a necklace and collar set with outstanding rectangular Colombian emeralds. It was made by Cartier for his father, the elegant, cricket-playing Ranjitsinhji. In recent times, an emerald and pearl necklace that once belonged to Ranjitsinhji appeared for auction at Christie's devoid of its provenance. Photographs of Ranji wearing the jewel established its authenticity. Other Nawanagar jewels made by Cartier included an extraordinarily beautiful and rare necklace of coloured diamonds. Today, these commissions can be seen only in photographs, since most have been sold to meet expenses or recycled into new settings.

Among over 600 former Indian royals, the Nizam of Hyderabad was reputed at one time to be the wealthiest man in the world. The Deccan was the richest province of the Mughal empire encompassing as it did the legendary Golconda diamond mines. The treasury of the nizams was replete with vast quantities of gemstones and jewellery. In the immediate aftermath of Independence and the annexation of Hyderabad into the Indian union, Mir Osman Ali Khan, the seventh nizam set up a series of jewellery trusts to serve as security for future generations of the Asaf Jah family.

After Osman's death in 1967 the jewels were mired in controversy and litigation until they were finally purchased by the Government of India. This collection is perhaps the sole remnant of the vast hoard of royal jewels that once reposed in the treasuries of India's native princes.

In a beautiful photograph by S. Frankel, Sahibzadi Ahmad un-nisa and the toddler Salabat Jah gaze solemnly and impassively into the camera weighed down by spectacular jewels and embroidered finery (figure 8). Daughter and son respectively of Mahbub Ali Khan, the sixth nizam of Hyderabad, lineage and wealth are proclaimed in the photograph. Heavy, adult-sized jewels, encrusted with Golconda diamonds and pearls,

8. Sahibzadi Ahmad un-nisa and Sahibzada Salabat Jah, by S. Frankel, Trimulgherry, c. 1910. Chowmahalla Palace, Hyderabad. Re-photographed by Deepthi Sasidharan.

9. *Kanthi almas kanval wa parab*, gold necklace set with flat diamonds. Western India, 19th century. From *Jewels of the Nizams,* by Usha Bala Krishnan. Photograph: Bharath Ramamrutham.

10. *Har murassa*, necklace with enamelling, diamonds, and emerald drops. Deccan, early 19th century. From *Jewels of the Nizams,* by Usha Bala Krishnan. Photograph: Bharath Ramamrutham.

11. Sahibzada Salabat Jah, by S. Frankel, Trimulgherry, c. 1910. Chowmahalla Palace, Hyderabad. Re-photographed by Deepthi Sasidharan.

12. *Sarpech murassa*, turban ornament with enamelling, diamonds, and emerald drops. Deccan, early 19th century. From *Jewels of the Nizams*, by Usha Bala Krishnan. Photograph: Bharath Ramamrutham.

13. Zenana women, Hyderabad, photograph by Raja Deen Dayal and Sons, c. 1915. Chowmahalla Palace, Hyderabad. Re-photographed by Deepthi Sasidharan.

incongruously at odds with their age, adorn both children. Salabat Jah wears an extraordinary and unusual necklace of large flat table-cut diamonds (figure 9) while baby Ahmad un-nisa is adorned with rows of pearls and large emerald- and diamond-set necklaces (figure 10). Both jewels have survived the vicissitudes of time and are part of the collection acquired by the Indian Government.

In yet another photograph, the diminutive three-year-old Salabat Jah is photographed standing with a sword in one hand (figure 11). Strands of Basra pearls interspersed with emerald beads hang like garlands around his neck and gem-set armbands adorn his arms. The *sarpech* set with diamonds and large emerald beads is striking and obviously so heavy that his head tilts to one side.

In photograph after photograph, turban ornaments function as crowning symbols of temporal power. The jewel evolved from a simple feather and strands of pearls to an elaborate confection of gemstones. Under the British no Indian ruler was permitted to use the title "king" or wear

anything resembling an "imperial" crown. The combination of *sarpatti* (long band set with pearls and gems), *kalgi* (upright plume), and *turra* (gem-set bird or flower head with flowing tassels that was tucked into the folds of the turban) was India's answer to the imperial crown. Few *sarpech* survived the melting crucible. The one worn by Salabat Jah appears to be similar to the one that forms part of the Nizam's collection (figure 12).

Zenana studios were established to photograph women away from the male gaze. Amongst the many photographers who worked in India at this time, few became as prominent as Raja Deen Dayal. His lenses captured the world of India's maharajas as few others did. He was official court photographer to Mahbub Ali Khan, the sixth nizam, and was invited to the palace to photograph Mahbub's women and children. Photographs of children and women were personal and private images and not intended for public scrutiny. From the sixth nizam's zenana is a rare photograph of a group of women – no doubt favourite concubines (figure 13). To women, with whom they are most commonly associated, jewels constituted personal wealth and security. Each of the women in the picture is adorned with an identical set of jewels comprising necklaces, earrings, and even anklets. The unusual square gem-set pendant that is suspended from the right side of the neck (figure 14) might have been categorized as just another neck jewel if it were not for this rare photograph that shows how it was worn. Few such pictures have survived, since the glass plates were either destroyed or handed over to the ruler along with the prints.

The portrait and jewellery are inextricably linked. Although the camera remained "objective", it opened a window into the private wealth of the maharajas. The sitter unequivocally communicates his status in posture, body language, clothes, and adornment. Tukoji Rao Holkar II, Maharaja of Indore, photographed c. 1875, sits in regal splendour adorned with an elaborate array of jewels (figure 15). Nothing in his arrogant stance suggests that the Holkars were lower-caste Marathas, petty warlords, and mere mercenaries who carved out a kingdom for themselves from the crumbling edifice of the Mughal empire. More than anything else, his jewels proclaim the reserves of the Indore treasury. From the beautiful and unusual turban jewel with a peacock centrepiece, to the rows of necklaces around his neck, the large diamond

14. ***Taveez choti mat char larha marvareed*****, gold and diamond amulet for the hair on four strands of pearls. Deccan, late 18th century. From** ***Jewels of the Nizams,*** **by Usha Bala Krishnan. Photograph: Bharath Ramamrutham.**

15. (below) Maharaja Tukoji Rao Holkar II of Indore, cabinet photograph by Bourne and Shepherd, c. 1875. Chowmahalla Palace, Hyderabad. Re-photographed by Deepthi Sasidharan.

16. (right) Krishnaraja Wadiyar, Maharaja of Mysore, image used on a carte-de-visite, Bourne and Shepherd, c. 1895. Chowmahalla Palace, Hyderabad. Re-photographed by Deepthi Sasidharan.

ring, bangles, and gem-encrusted sword, Holkar appears to unequivocally convey his wealth and authority.

The photograph of the young Maharaja of Mysore, Krishnaraja Wadiyar (figure 16) exhibits social importance, freezes the years, and reiterates the continuity of family traditions. Krishnaraja was only ten years old when, in 1895, he ascended the throne of Mysore, the premier Hindu princely state in the empire. Like their northern counterparts the Maharajas of Mysore also sought to emulate their English masters. While the young prince appears uncomfortable in his richly embroidered coat, heavy turban, and elaborate jewels, he was probably quite comfortable in the leather shoes and incongruous white gloves. Although ruler of a state in the southernmost part of India, royal jewels, especially those worn for durbars and formal occasions were styled on Mughal prototypes. The pearl necklace with a tassel on either side is the same one that Krishnaraja wears in the Ravi Varma oleograph done on the occasion of his marriage.

Photographs provide a glimpse into the treasury of the maharajas. Without these images, one cannot even begin to estimate what they had. Going beyond the sheer wealth, quantity, and magnificence of the jewels themselves, these portraits provide a glimpse of prevailing tastes and fashions, craftsmanship skills, and royal ateliers. Some of the legendary jewels and gems that can only be seen in photographs include the seven-strand pearl necklace and a necklace of diamonds the size of chandelier drops with the 128-carat Star of the South as the centrepiece, once owned by the Baroda royals. In the Baroda treasury also reposed the Empress Eugenie diamond weighing 51 carats, and the English Dresden weighing 76.5 carats. The Jonker diamonds and a superb three-strand pearl necklace were owned by the Maharaja of Indore. The Maharaja of Dhrangadhra's turban ornament consisted of pearls, diamonds, and a 160-carat emerald. The Cartier commission for the Maharaja of Kapurthala included a crown studded with 3,000 perfectly matched diamonds and a fabulous belt buckle set with a topaz. The crown jewels made by Cartier and Boucheron for the Maharaja of Patiala comprised armbands, necklaces with emeralds and diamonds, turban jewels with emerald drops, and a suite of other jewels. The Maharaj Rana of Dholpur's necklace contained nine rows of perfectly matched pearls, each as large as a thrush's egg. An emerald and ruby necklace made for the ruler of Patna, and the Indore pearls were legendary. The magnificent Jaipur gold anklets were set with 364 diamonds, and a tiara with 1,527 diamonds. All were part of a truly fabulous royal treasury of jewels.

Notes

1. Sir William Foster (ed.), *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India 1615–19,* London, 1926, pp. 378–79.

2. Amy G. Poster, et al., *Realms of Heroism, Indian Paintings at The Brooklyn Museum,* The Brooklyn Museum, New York, 1994, pp. 200–01.

3. V.P. Menon, *The Story of the Integration of the Indian States*, New Delhi, 1956, p. 480.

Depicting Kingship

Portraits of the Maharajas of Jaipur

VIBHUTI SACHDEV AND GILES TILLOTSON

In the veranda of the Chandra Mahal in the Jaipur City Palace are a series of portraits of former rulers of the state. The work of the German artist A.H. Müller, they were commissioned by the last ruling maharaja, Sawai Man Singh II (r. 1922–49), at a time when princely rule was coming to a close. A commission for a whole series of portraits most of whose subjects were no longer alive would present a challenge to even the most capable of artists. Müller had to rely extensively on imagination, notably in his depiction of Kakilji (figure 1), the son and successor of the founder of the dynasty, Dhola Rai, who had fixed the state capital at Amber. Kakilji briefly led his clan in the mid-11th century, a period for which little visual evidence survives, so Müller has dressed him in a Mughal jama over a dhoti. For others in his series, Müller could refer to earlier portraits that are preserved in the royal collections. Tracing Müller's sources reveals much about the style and the purposes of the depiction of kingship in Jaipur state.

The best known portrait of Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II (r. 1699–1743) is a painting dated c. 1740 and attributed to one Sahib Ram (figure 2). No inscription identifies the subject, but his physical resemblance to other known images of Sawai Jai Singh leaves no room for doubt. The ruler who is famous as the founder of Jaipur city and as the builder of five observatories is depicted with a glowing golden nimbus – a device adopted from Mughal portraiture but here also a reminder of the suryavanshi or "sun-born" bloodline of his clan.

1. Kakilji, veranda of the Chandra Mahal, by A.H. Müller.

Apart from this nimbus there is little to indicate his status as a king. His dress is comparatively plain: the grey and yellow *butidar chuga* (spotted tunic) is no doubt of fine cloth, but it is not ostentatious. His jewellery is limited to a signet ring, pearl and ruby earrings, and a necklace consisting of a jewelled pendant on a single rope of pearls. The staff that he clutches in his right hand and on which he gently rests is not a distinctive symbol of kingship, but is suggestive rather of a learned and elderly man. The foundations of Sawai Jai Singh's reputation as an intellectual and a statesman, rather than as a warrior king, seem already well established. The portrait shows him as he would have appeared in his early 50s, a few years before his death.

Though it is often reproduced, two remarkable features of this portrait are not so often commented upon. First, though

2. Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II, by Sahib Ram. 241 x 155 cm.

3. Maharaja Sawai Ishvari Singh, by Sahib Ram. 241 x 160 cm.

stylistically it conforms to the standard and widespread Mughal-derived idiom of Indian portraiture, this is no miniature: this image is lifesize. It is painted not in gouache on paper but in lacquer (*chandras*) on cotton cloth. Secondly, it does not stand alone but is the first in a series of lifesize portraits by Sahib Ram, depicting Sawai Jai Singh and his successors. What we might infer about the meaning and purpose of these images from their scale is a point that we shall return to; but first we must introduce the others in the series.

When Sawai Jai Singh died in 1743 he was succeeded first by his elder surviving son, Ishvari Singh (r. 1743–50). In the case of his portrait from the series (figure 3) a helpful inscription identifies both the subject and the artist, and specifies the year

of composition as VS 1807 (corresponding to 1750 CE, the last year of his reign).[1] Again for a royal portrait of the period, it is notably restrained. Ishvari Singh wears only a plain white *angarkhi*, with no over-garment. His bare ankles reveal that he has even dispensed with the *paijama* (a mode of dress that was often adopted by ordinary Rajputs as late as the 19th century, but was less customary at court). The range of jewellery has been augmented by the addition of a turban ornament, but the nimbus has disappeared, and the prevailing simplicity is emphasized by the grey-green void behind the framing arch. The handles of a *kataar* (dagger) appear at his right side, suggesting such a weapon is held in his *kamarband* (sash), and perhaps also intended to suggest that the man of learning has been succeeded by a man of action. The gesture of the thumb thrust into the *kamarband* is found in numerous 18th-century Jaipur portraits, even of merchants and servants,[2] and conveys that the subject is at ease.

4. Maharaja Sawai Madho Singh I, by Sahib Ram. 221 x 165 cm.

He wasn't, in fact. Throughout his short reign Ishvari Singh was threatened by the claims to the *gaddi* of his younger half-brother Madho Singh, who claimed precedence on the basis of his birth by a Mewar princess.[3] At last in 1750, assisted by Mewar and by Maratha forces, Madho Singh achieved his goal, pushing Ishvari Singh to suicide and taking his place. Everything about Madho Singh's portrait in the series (figure 4) proclaims his royal status. There is no modest understatement here, but all the trappings of power. Unlike his predecessors, Madho Singh (r. 1750–68) is shown seated on a *gaddi* – though this pose may also owe something to his actual physique, since he was immensely portly but was endowed with somewhat short legs. The nimbus has been reinstated. His left hand rests on a *dhaal* (shield), his right hand holds a sacred *mala* (rosary), indicating his dual royal role as warrior and as pious devotee. A more visible *kataar* is held in a splendid *kamarband* and there is a profusion of jewellery: he wears no fewer than five necklaces, a *sarpech* as well as a turban band, besides bracelets, earrings, and a *bajuband* around his right upper arm. In all of the portraits of the series the jewellery is three-dimensional: it is built up in plaster laid over the cloth and coloured with pigment. The brilliant colours used here realistically suggest the emeralds, rubies, pearls, and sapphires of Madho Singh's regal ornaments, and provide strong highlights even against the orange and golden yellow of the textiles. The pale architectural backdrop is enlivened by a crimson

rolled *chik*, above which an inscription records that the portrait was painted in vs 1814 (1757 CE), when Madho Singh was in his 30th year.[4]

When Madho Singh died in 1768 his elder son and successor Prithvi Singh was a minor aged five, who died ten years later as a result of a fall from his horse, without having achieved his majority or full ruling powers. This no doubt explains Prithvi Singh's absence from the Sahib Ram series (though there does exist a Mughal-style miniature portrait of him).[5] Prithvi Singh was succeeded in 1778 by his half-brother Pratap Singh, probably through the machinations of the latter's mother, who acted as his regent. Pratap Singh too was a minor, aged 13 at the time of his accession. But he survived longer, and in spite of continuing trouble with the Marathas he enjoyed a secure reign of 25 years (1778–1803) and became a major patron and connoisseur of literature, music, architecture, and painting.

Pratap Singh's portrait by Sahib Ram (figure 5) was painted, according to the inscription at the top, in vs 1850 (1793 CE) when the Maharaja was 28 years old.[6] It shares many features with the previous portraits in the series but also stands out as the most elegant and refined. The shield, introduced for Madho Singh to indicate the ruler's martial valour, is again present and is now accompanied by a sword (*dhoop*), but in a less conspicuous manner, both being hung from the waist, behind the figure. The nimbus has gone again; but the prominent sacred *mala* has been retained. The jewellery, though similar in quantity to Madho

5. Maharaja Sawai Pratap Singh, by Sahib Ram. 241 x 168 cm.

6. Maharaja Sawai Jagat Singh, by Sahib Ram or followers. 267 x 170 cm.

Singh's, seems much enhanced in splendour, as the uniform vivid green of the emeralds that are studded in Pratap Singh's *sarpech*, necklaces, *bajuband*, *kamarband*, *ponchis* (bracelets), and *angoothis* (rings) is well set off against the white and *zari* (gold-work) of his clothing.

Two innovations are conspicuous. In his left hand he holds a flower – a motif borrowed from 17th-century Mughal portraiture to indicate the ruler's heightened sensibility and connoisseurship. And the cloth of the skirt of his *angarkhi* is so refined and sheer as to be transparent, revealing the legs of his richly patterned *paijama* beneath. These features reflect artistic propensities which, by all accounts, Pratap Singh had indeed cultivated; but they also suggest qualities that had always been deemed necessary for a Hindu king, marking him out as a *rasik*, one who is appreciative and learned in the arts. The artist thus fuses both actual and ideal qualities, and succeeds in projecting at once the individual personality of Pratap Singh and the requirements of his kingly role.

Some further adjustments to the now well-established formula were made for Maharaja Sawai Jagat Singh (r. 1803–19) who succeeded on the death of his father Pratap Singh. In Jagat Singh's portrait (figure 6) the flower has multiplied but retreated beyond the veranda. The left hand now firmly grasps the sword, though in fact of all the rulers to date Jagat Singh was the least actively engaged in combat. The splendour of the textiles – especially the embroidered *chik* and the floral carpet, and the vivid gold and scarlet *dupatta* (scarf) wound around Jagat Singh's body – make it the most lavishly embellished image of the series.

One might question whether the portrait of Jagat Singh can be safely considered as much the work of Sahib Ram as the others. The second and fourth in the series bear inscriptions which mention the artist by name, and from its overall homogeneity the entire series is usually attributed to him.[7] This would entail an implausibly long career covering the 70 years between 1740 and 1810.[8] It seems more credible that the portrait of Jagat Singh was produced by another artist of the Jaipur *karkhana* (workshop) who had been trained by Sahib Ram, or at least by assistants working under the supervision of the aged master. In either event, the influence of Sahib Ram is apparent.

A related question is why the series should terminate with Jagat Singh rather than continue. The answer is a long absence of royal patronage. After Jagat Singh died in 1819 he was succeeded by a posthumous son, who was given the title Jai Singh III and for whom a regent governed until 1835. On the brink of taking power, Jai Singh III himself died, and was in turn succeeded by a minor, his infant son Ram Singh II, so that there followed immediately a second 16-year period of regency rule, until Ram Singh II was given full ruling powers in 1851. By the time that Ram Singh II got around to commissioning portraits, in the 1860s, the old Mughal-Rajput courtly style – even if executed on a heroic scale – looked out of date. Portraiture was now much influenced by photography, a new art form in which Ram Singh II took a great interest and was indeed personally accomplished.[9] Large portraits of the last three Maharajas will be like "blown-up" photographs rather than "blown-up" miniatures.

Numerous portraits of Ram Singh II (figure 7) are based on the same original photograph (see Gordon, figure 1).[10] They

7. Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh II, by a Jaipur artist. 135 x 114 cm.

show him seated casually on a European chair, his ankles crossed in repose, one arm resting on a table that is decorated with a vase of flowers. In spite of the fine clothes and the dagger at the waist, this image hardly attempts to project royal power. Details such as the spectacles and the *mizrab* (musician's plectrum ring) indicate that this is a naturalistic portrait of a learned gentleman of cultivated tastes.

Use and Dissemination

Though the pictorial style of the Sahib Ram series follows from contemporary and earlier Indian court portraiture, their scale of course does not. Mughal-style portraits, including earlier images of the rulers of Amber and Jaipur, remained essentially an art of the book, and small in format. Before the introduction of European-style oil painting on canvas, life-size images on cloth seem to have been restricted to a few of the Rajput courts. The early 19th-century English historian James Tod reports that such portraits were painted of the Udaipur maharanas from the mid-17th century onwards, and some of these have come to light.[11] As a complete sequence, intact and in situ, the Sahib Ram series appears unique.

It seems reasonable to suppose that their size was related to their intended use, that such large images were made to be displayed in some public or official space, and seen from a distance. If hung on the walls of the Sabha Niwas or palace audience hall, for example, they would convey images of the dynastic succession at least to those who were privileged to assemble there, including the maharaja's clansmen and *thakur*s (nobles). When interpreting the ideological import of Indian paintings, scholars are sometimes neglectful of the point that an ideology requires an audience. An art of the book, remaining bound in manuscripts or preserved in portfolios, as treasured private possessions, could convey little except to the patron and his immediate coterie. The Sahib Ram series, by contrast, fashioned for display, was clearly aimed at a wider audience.

Even if we are wrong in our surmise that Sahib Ram's images of the maharajas were originally made for the very room where they now reside,[12] it is undeniable that they did achieve a wider dissemination through later imitations of them in more public spaces.

LIEUTENANT GENERAL HIS HIGHNESS SARAMAD-I-RAJA HAI HINDUSTAN
RAJ RAJENDRA SHRI MAHARAJADHIRAJ SIR SAWAI MADHO SINGHJI BAHADUR II
G.C.S.I. G.C.I.E. G.C.V.O. G.B.E. L.L.D. A.D. 1880 - 1922

8. (facing page) Maharaja Sawai Madho Singh II, Albert Hall, Jaipur artist.

9. Maharaja Man Singh I, Albert Hall, Jaipur artist.

The "Albert Hall", a museum located in the city's public gardens, was completed in 1887 under the patronage of Maharaja Sawai Madho Singh II. Following on from the Jaipur Exhibition of 1883, the Museum's purpose was to showcase the arts and industries of Rajasthan and to proclaim a dominant position within that context for the commercial products of Jaipur itself. The Museum's founders hoped to improve the standard of local arts and to amuse whilst educating and instructing the public.[13] At its very entrance, the visitor is confronted by what the first curator, Thomas Holbein Hendley, called "a series of full-sized portraits of the principal Rulers of the State since 1503".[14] They are painted in fresco, high on the walls of the building's loggia. Their height separates them from their audience – they are not for close inspection – but makes them visible to a greater number, like a big-screen projection of miniatures.

Though the dynastic table is incomplete, there are no fewer than 14 of these portraits. How were the artists able to reconstruct the appearance of so many former rulers? The present maharaja and his predecessor presented no problem: their portraits were based on photographs (figure 8).[15] The images of the 16th- and 17th-century rulers were based on Mughal portraits: either specific models, if available, or generic types, if not (figure 9). The portraits of the five rulers from Sawai Jai Singh to Jagat Singh were closely based on Sahib Ram's paintings. This is evident from their appearance alone (figures 10 and 11); but it is also confirmed by Hendley who recorded that they were "copied from what are presumed to be authentic, and for the most part contemporary, pictures".[16] The first two of Sahib Ram's compositions have been inverted, and the third modified to make the subject stand up, so that all the rulers stand facing left, in uniform pose. And the original architectural backgrounds have been replaced by a common ground of carpet and void. But the images of the rulers themselves are plainly his. So the realm of impact of Sahib Ram's maharajas has been expanded from court to city; their audience increased to include citizens as well as courtiers.

A second set of portraits based on Sahib Ram's may be found in the hall around the *garbhagriha* of the Sri Madhavbihari Tanwarji temple, constructed outside the Chand Pol of the city in 1926. These versions are smaller; they are horizontal not vertical in format; and again the backgrounds have been changed, with the

architecture here replaced by landscape settings. But the personal appearance and clothing of each ruler is recognizably as depicted by Sahib Ram. It seems that Sahib Ram's versions of the rulers had achieved iconic status, in the sense that they show what the Jaipur public had come to accept as the authentic appearance of their maharajas. Anything else would seem wrong. It is therefore hardly surprising that A.H. Müller should have turned to Sahib Ram for inspiration for his portrait of Jaipur's founder, when struggling with his great commission (figure 12). He has taken liberties with the clothing, but he has retained the now iconic pose; and just in case we should fail to get the reference, he has put Sawai Jai Singh's Jantar Mantar in the background.

10. (facing page left) Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II, Albert Hall, Jaipur artist after Sahib Ram.

11. (facing page right) Maharaja Sawai Ishvari Singh, Albert Hall, Jaipur artist after Sahib Ram.

12. (right) Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II, veranda of the Chandra Mahal, by A.H. Müller.

The unusual shape of Müller's portraits requires some explanation. The veranda of the Chandra Mahal was redecorated early in the 20th century with designs that are obviously based on carpets (figure 13), and are perhaps derived specifically from the sumptuous plates of T.H. Hendley's book on the Jaipur royal collection of Mughal carpets, published in 1905.[17] Müller's portraits have been cut to fit over cartouches that were part of that scheme.

The need for a new series of portraits arose, of course, from the new patron's desire to have himself included. Müller's portrait of Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II (figure 14) is based on a photograph and shows him wearing the robes of a Knight Grand Commander of the Order of the Star of India.[18]

Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful to Maharaj Narendra Singh and the staff of the Jaipur Palace Museum for permission to study and reproduce the paintings in their collections; to Andrew Topsfield and Rima Hooja for helpful suggestions in their research; and to Shri Tara Chandra Jain, storekeeper of the Albert Hall, for kind assistance in examining the portraits in that Museum.

All photographs taken for the authors by R.G. Colour Lab Pvt. Ltd., Jaipur.

Notes

1. "*shrimanmaharajdhiraj shri sawai ishvarisinghji ko avastha baras 29 ka vivaran ya sahibram chatere minimagmikh* [?] *digh samvat 1807.*"

2. See for example, Chandramani Singh, *Textiles and Costumes from the Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum*, Jaipur, 1979, pl. 10, b & c.

3. The claim of Madho Singh I rested on the terms of a treaty that Sawai Jai Singh had made with the Maharana of Udaipur in 1707, after the Mughal civil war, when Mewar forces helped Sawai Jai Singh recover control of Amber.

4. The dates tally: Madho Singh was born in 1728 and would therefore have been 29 (in his 30th year) in 1757 CE.

5. Now in the Oriental & India Office Collections, London.

6. " … *shrimaharajdhiraj shrisawaipratapsinghji ki umarbaras unatis ki 29 bhanai sahibramchhatere samvat 1850 ko.*" Again the dates tally: Pratap Singh was born in 1765 and therefore would have been 28 (in his 29th year) in 1793 CE (VS 1850). Another version of the painting, also probably by Sahib Ram, hangs in the textile section of the Palace Museum; this bears only the brief inscription "*sarvashrestha milti*" ("the best likeness"), presumably

13. The *tibari* (three arches) of the Chandra Mahal veranda.

14. Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II, veranda of the Chandra Mahal, by A.H. Müller.

recording a contemporary verdict on its merit. A third image by Sahib Ram of Pratap Singh is a portrait bust, now in the Museum Art Gallery.

7. See for example, A.K. Das in *Marg*, Vol. XXX/4, pp. 82, 93.

8. Das, ibid., calculates 50 years; but the portrait of Sawai Jai Singh, if made in the ruler's lifetime (as he says), cannot be any later than the early 1740s; while the portrait of Jagat Singh, showing a mature man, cannot be earlier than c. 1810, since Jagat Singh was born in vs 1845/1788 CE (according to Hanuman Sharma, *Jaipur Rajya ka Itihas*, repr. Jaipur, 1996, p. 239).

9. For Ram Singh's role as a photographer, see Yaduendra Sahai, *The Photographer Prince*, Jaipur, 1996.

10. Another version of this photograph was recently with Malik Elahi of Alla Buksh & Sons, M.I. Road, Jaipur.

11. See James Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, Vol. 1, London, 1828, p. 358; and Andrew Topsfield, *Court Painting at Udaipur*, Zurich, 2002, fig. 2. We are grateful to Dr Topsfield for these references.

12. The Sabha Niwas is now the Art Gallery of the Palace Museum.

13. On the Exhibition, see Giles Tillotson, "The Jaipur Exhibition of 1883", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. 14/2, 2004, pp. 111–26. On the design and construction of the building see Vibhuti Sachdev and Giles Tillotson, *Building Jaipur*, London and New Delhi, 2002, pp. 102–08.

14. Thomas Holbein Hendley, *Handbook to the Jeypore Museum*, Calcutta, 1895, p. 2. Some of the paintings bear Devanagari inscriptions dated 1937 or 1939 CE. These, we infer, must refer to a later restoration and retouching of the portraits. The reference to the portraits in Hendley's *Handbook* of 1895 is sufficient evidence that they were part of the building's original decorative scheme.

15. The portrait of Madho Singh II, reproduced here, must be a later substitute, as it shows him advanced in age, and is based on a photograph taken in 1903.

16. Hendley, op. cit., p. 2.

17. T.H. Hendley, *Asian Carpets: XVI and XVII Century Designs from the Jaipur Palaces*, London, 1905. The plates (as also most likely the Chandra Mahal decorations) were made by local draughtsmen.

18. Archibald Herman Müller (1878–1952) was the son of a German father and an Indian mother. He studied at the Madras School of Art. In the later years of his career he worked in various places in Rajasthan including Jaipur, Bikaner, and Jodhpur. For more on his life and work, see Partha Mitter, *Art and Nationalism in Colonial India, 1850–1922*, Cambridge, 1994, pp. 96–101.

Presenting an Image

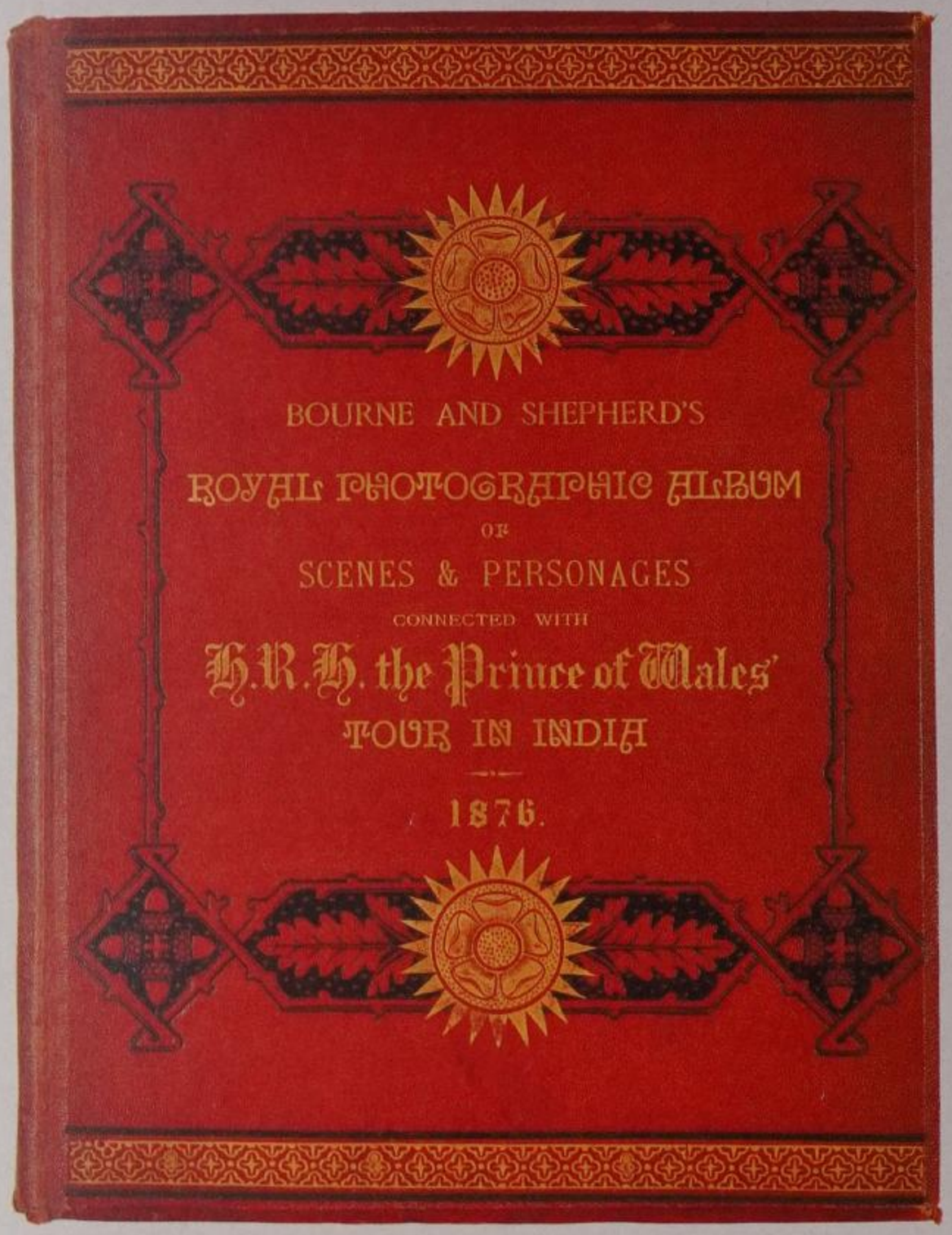
Princely Photography in India

SOPHIE GORDON

In 1875, HRH the Prince of Wales, the future King-Emperor Edward VII, visited India on a tour that was to last almost five months. Arriving at Bombay on November 8, he travelled across the country, accompanied by Sydney Prior Hall, the official artist for the tour and an as yet unidentified photographer. The work of this unknown photographer was subsequently compiled into a commemorative volume, *Royal photographic album of scenes & personages connected with HRH the Prince of Wales' Tour in India, 1876*.[1] The book was published in 1876 by India's leading photographic firm, Bourne and Shepherd, incorporating in addition a number of topographical photographs from the firm's existing stock, some of which had been taken in the 1860s by Samuel Bourne (figure 2).

Alongside this publication, the anonymous photographer also had his work collected into six large photograph albums, where it was mixed in with prints from Bourne and Shepherd's stock. The albums, now part of The Royal Collection, were beautifully bound in red leather and decorated with gilt tooling. The photographs document the locations where the royal entourage halted, showing the palaces visited and the landscapes explored. Significantly, the book and the albums also contain a large number of carefully composed photographic portraits of the leading rulers of India. Some of the portraits were acquired during visits to the individual ruler's territories, such as the strikingly simple study of Maharaja Ram Singh II of Jaipur, from 1876 (figure 1). The Maharaja was a keen photographer – as indeed was the Prince of Wales

1. Ram Singh II, Maharaja of Jaipur, self-portrait, attributed, 1875–76. Albumen print.
The Royal Collection © 2006 HM Queen Elizabeth II (RCIN 2701827).



2. Bourne and Shepherd's *Royal photographic album of scenes & personages connected with HRH the Prince of Wales' Tour in India, 1876.* Cover page of the copy given to Queen Alexandra. The Royal Collection © 2006 HM Queen Elizabeth II.

– and it is tempting to speculate that this example is either a self-portrait or a combined work by two princely creators. A few years earlier, in 1870, when the Duke of Edinburgh (younger brother of the Prince of Wales) had toured India with the Viceroy Lord Mayo, Ram Singh made a studio portrait of the young prince, which was subsequently sent back to Queen Victoria for her album (figure 3).

The majority of the portraits collected by the Prince of Wales were taken as a series in either Calcutta or Bombay, marking the maharajas' attendance at the two major durbars hosted by the Prince. On these occasions, each ruler in turn presented a lavish gift to the Prince, who then offered reciprocal gifts.[2] For a photographer, the opportunity to include so many of the leading nobles of the day in a photographic portfolio would have been seized upon eagerly. The backdrops of the photographs themselves, as well as the pieces of furniture used in the portraits, suggest that a temporary studio may have been set up at the location of the durbars, and each ruler was photographed in turn. Every portrait is noticeably alike, not only in the sharing of props, but also in the simple stance of the subject. In many of the portraits, the subject is standing with one hand resting on a table or chair. Occasionally the props remind us of the event which occasioned the portrait: in the photograph of the young Gaekwad of Baroda, for example, the cover of a book sitting on the table prominently displays the "AE" cipher of the Prince of Wales (figure 4).

The Indian tour of the Prince of Wales was deemed to have been a great diplomatic triumph, confirming in the minds of

3. Prince Alfred, The Duke of Edinburgh, 1870, by Maharaja Ram Singh II of Jaipur. Albumen print. The Royal Collection © 2006 HM Queen Elizabeth II (RCIN 2902209).

4. The Gaekwad of Baroda, by Bourne and Shepherd, 1875–76. Albumen print. The Royal Collection © HM Queen Elizabeth II (RCIN 2701622).

British politicians that the proclamation on January 1, 1877 declaring Queen Victoria to be Empress of India would be favourably received. The Imperial Assemblage held in Delhi to mark the proclamation required once again the presence of the leading rulers of India at a durbar to acknowledge British rule. The portraits that were published to mark the 1877 assemblage were the same as those taken during the durbars of the previous year, with the intervening deaths of one or two princes being only a minor inconvenience. The portraits were published once more in J. Talboys Wheeler's volume, *The History of the Imperial Assemblage at Delhi held on the 1st January 1877 to celebrate the assumption of the title of Empress of India by Her Majesty the Queen*.

The order in which the portraits appear within the 1877 book is significant as, following photographs of Queen Victoria and of the Viceroy Lord Lytton, the positioning of the subsequent portraits follows the official order of precedence, established publicly through the table of gun salutes. Thus, the Nizam of Hyderabad, as the most prominent ruler receiving a salute of 21 guns, is first, succeeded by Mysore and Gwalior, who also receive 21 guns. The next rank of those receiving only 19 guns follows, including Bhopal and Indore, and so on, down the table.

These royal portraits were widely distributed by Bourne and Shepherd, often appearing in albums and books, in varying sizes and formats. Collectively the portraits mark the first attempt to provide a complete photographic record of the rulers of India and this can, in retrospect, be seen as a watershed for official portraiture in India. It was only through the camera that what had previously been seen as a disparate and slightly exotic group of independent rulers could now be brought together within the same album pages, the collection representing British order over the entire country. The very similarity of the portraits, with the rulers wearing their British decorations and orders, demonstrates a taxonomic vision at work (however unconscious it may have been). The series of portraits diminishes the individual status of each ruler as the head of an independent state; instead the ruler is placed as one smaller element within a broader hierarchy, which had the British Crown at its head. Later publications associated with the Imperial Durbars of 1903 and 1911 were to follow this approach, including Sorabji Jehangir's three-volume work, *Princes and Chiefs of India* (1903), with portraits by an unknown photographer.

Studio Portraiture in India and Abroad

Portraits from the 1876 series remain well known and easily recognized today, but are only a small fraction of the hundreds of photographic portraits produced of the princes. Maharajas and other Indian rulers frequently subjected themselves to the photographic studio, both in India and on travels abroad in Europe and Great Britain. The act of making a portrait usually marked a significant event, such as a marriage or investiture, a trip overseas, or occasionally the bestowing of an honour, such as the receipt of one of the British chivalric orders. In 1881, Queen Victoria presented the Order of the Crown of India

5. "Her Highness Lakshmi Bhayi Senior Rani of Travancore on whom the Queen conferred the honour of the C.I., 1886", by an unknown photographer, 1886. Albumen print. The Royal Collection © HM Queen Elizabeth II (RCIN 2907286).

to the Maharani of Travancore, the highest order available to Indian women.[3] The Maharani received the honour in India, and subsequently sent a portrait to Queen Victoria of herself wearing the badge in 1886 (figure 5).

The portrait is today part of a large series of albums containing portraits of rulers from across the world, compiled by the Queen throughout her life. Within the royal photograph albums, Indian rulers and nobles sit side by side with Europe's princes and princesses, diplomats and politicians, gathered together in a collection that demonstrates the Queen's desire to know and understand the world through personal contact with her peers.[4]

6. Princess Victoria Gouramma of Coorg, by Roger Fenton, 1854. Albumen print. The Royal Collection © HM Queen Elizabeth II (RCIN 2906573).

The creation and bestowal of these various orders, derived from existing European traditions, was an attempt to incorporate the Indian rulers into the feudal hierarchy. The photograph became the visual record of this, explicitly acknowledging that the rulers of India had been successfully drawn into the colonial narrative. The princes' concern for status and their enthusiastic embracing of the honours system encouraged competition between the rulers, as they attempted to acquire more orders and distinctions than their neighbours. The photographic portrait produced for public consumption thus fulfilled two important functions: it demonstrated the recognition of British colonial rule and the ruler's acceptance of it, and, almost contradictorily, it attempted to assert the individual ruler's power and status within the princely hierarchy. The portraits as a result often make uncomfortable viewing, for behind the expression of material wealth and status is the ultimate power of colonial rule, suppressing any independence and simultaneously making the princes complicit in the act of their suppression.

The results of a session in a European photographic studio were much the same as those in India. Examples from the early days of photography are rare, as the princes did not travel to the same extent that they did later. A remarkable series of portraits of Princess Gouramma of Coorg survives, however, taken by Roger Fenton (1819–69), one of the most accomplished photographers of the 19th century. Princess Gouramma, daughter of the former Raja of Coorg, was brought by her father to England and encouraged to convert to Christianity in 1852. The Princess took the name Victoria as the Queen was her principal sponsor, and the ceremony was performed in Buckingham Palace by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The portrait, taken in November 1854 when the Princess was 13, shows a sad young woman dressed in an uncomfortable-looking Victorian gown (figure 6).

As overseas travel became more possible and popular, the princes attended the most fashionable studios of the day, which in London meant Bassano, Vandyk, or Lafayette. Alexander Bassano (1829–1913) established the earliest of the three studios, operating in London from 1850, with the studio lasting beyond Alexander's retirement in 1901, until 1974. The Vandyk studio was founded by Carl Vandyk, but gained success under the guidance of his son Herbert, c. 1880–1943. The Bassano and

7. Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Madan Singh Bahadur, Maharaja of Kishangarh, by Vandyk, 1915. Gelatin silver print. The National Portrait Gallery, London (x74778).

Vandyk studios were amalgamated in 1964, but ten years later finally went out of business. The Lafayette studio, established in Dublin by James Lauder (1853–1923), became highly fashionable after the London premises were opened in 1897. The business continued until 1952.

The Indian rulers and their consorts, when in London, would make the journey to one of these studios to have their portraits taken. Many such sittings took place in 1911 when a number of rulers came to London for the Coronation of the new King-Emperor George V. The great advantage of photography was that, in the hands of a skilful operator, the portrait could be manipulated – "touched up" – to erase thickening waists and lined faces, while the "truthfulness" of photography assured everyone that the image was a mirror of reality.

What is particularly striking, however, is the change in how individuals chose to present themselves over the years. During the late 19th century, between 1877 and the Imperial Durbars in 1903 and 1911, the rulers dressed up for photographic sittings, displaying their most splendid jewels and costumes, in a deliberate display of wealth and power. The First World War changed this, demanding a more sober and restrained approach. Many princes contributed to the war as officers and through the provision of troops from their state. Several rulers and their sons, including the Maharaja of Kishangarh (figure 7), had themselves photographed in military uniform. These portraits were more than constructed images to serve the times, however. Copies were sent from Britain back to family members in India, as a silent memento, demonstrating an awareness of the danger of the war in Europe and the real possibility of death.

Photographic Tours and Documentation

Amongst the earliest royal photographic portraits, there are surprisingly few daguerreotypes, perhaps reflecting the difficulty in acquiring or using such specialized equipment outside the major cities in India. The portrait of the Raja of Dhar in the British Library is perhaps the best surviving example, as it combines the sharpness of the technique with subtle hand-painting which highlights the diamonds and emeralds worn by the Raja (figure 8). This technique of over-painting portraits would later come to be embraced enthusiastically at the princely courts before achieving widespread popular appeal in the early 20th century.

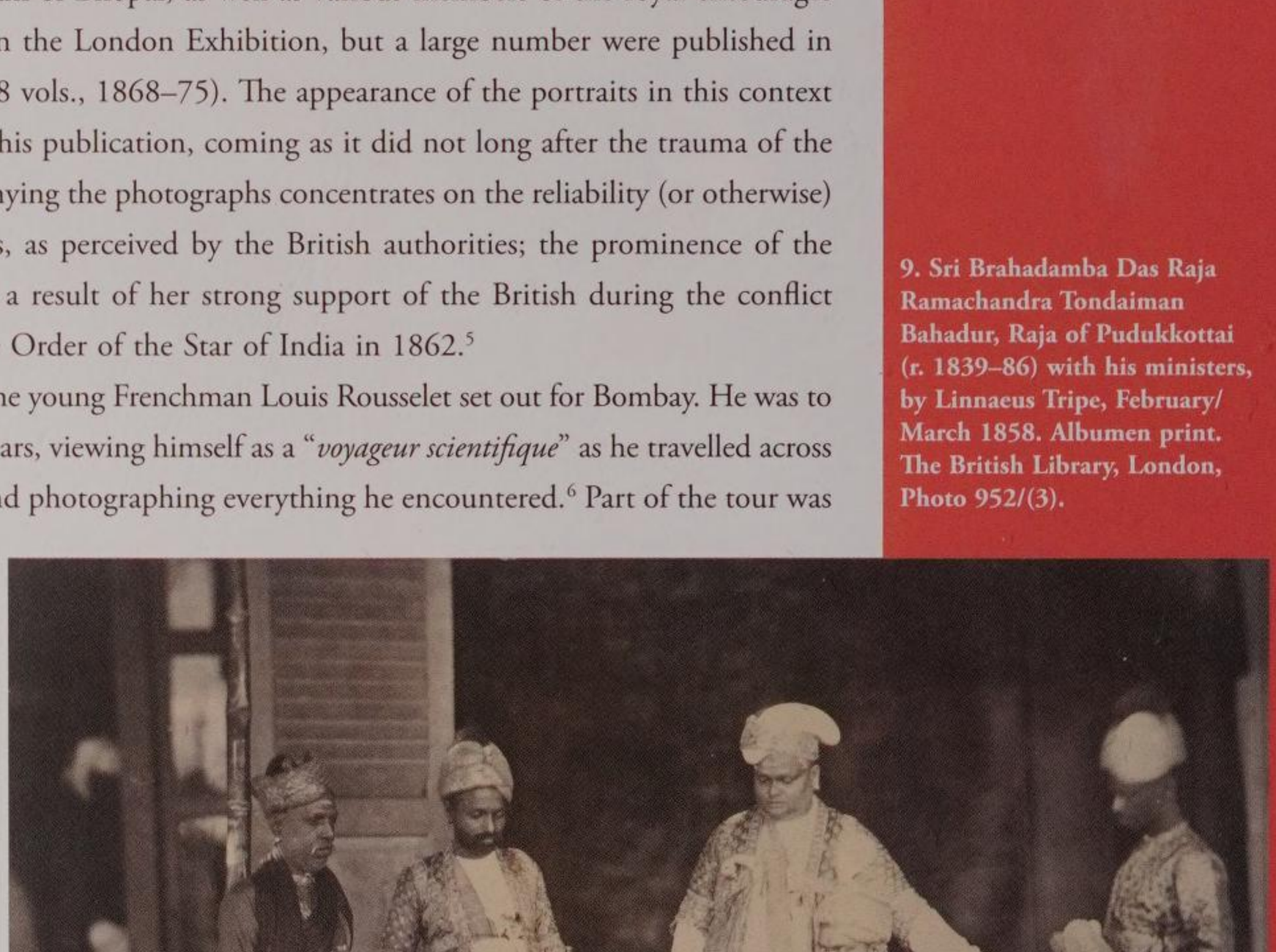
Other photographers, often British, made tours to various parts of India, recording the landscape and architecture. When they passed through the princely states, they would visit the ruler who could often be persuaded to sit for a portrait. In February and March 1858, Linnaeus Tripe working as the Government Photographer to the Madras Presidency (and known today primarily for his architectural views) made some unusual portraits

8. Jaswant Rao Ponwar, Raja of Dhar, early 1850s. Daguerreotype, with added paint. The British Library, London, Photo 67/(1).

of Ramachandra Tondaiman the Raja of Pudukkottai, showing him in durbar and also with his ministers (figure 9). The photographs, rejecting the standard, more formal approach for official groups, seem almost unprepared as the participants look slightly bewildered at the whole procedure. Two prints were published as plates in *Photographic Views of Poodoocottah* in Spring 1860 and, given Tripe's commission for the Government, they have to be considered within the broader context of colonial documentation and record-making for the purposes of administration and control.

Into this category also falls the work of James Waterhouse who, in 1862, photographed several local rulers as he toured Central India, fulfilling a commission from the Foreign Department to provide material for the International Exhibition in London. His portraits of the Raja of Ratlam, the Maharaja of Indore, and the Begam of Bhopal, as well as various members of the royal entourages were submitted too late for use in the London Exhibition, but a large number were published in Volume 7 of *The People of India* (8 vols., 1868–75). The appearance of the portraits in this context underlines the political scope of this publication, coming as it did not long after the trauma of the 1857 Uprising. The text accompanying the photographs concentrates on the reliability (or otherwise) of the people in the photographs, as perceived by the British authorities; the prominence of the Begam of Bhopal can be seen as a result of her strong support of the British during the conflict and her subsequent receipt of the Order of the Star of India in 1862.[5]

Leaving France in June 1863, the young Frenchman Louis Rousselet set out for Bombay. He was to remain in India for the next five years, viewing himself as a "*voyageur scientifique*" as he travelled across the country, writing, sketching, and photographing everything he encountered.[6] Part of the tour was spent in the princely states of Rajputana and Central India, where Rousselet seems to have enjoyed greatly his meetings with the various rulers. The resulting portraits, although not scientific studies intended for an ethnographic survey, are accompanied by a text that nevertheless betrays a European colonial gaze. After meeting the Maharaj Rana of Dholpur in January 1867, Rousselet places him before his readers as "a true specimen of the Jat warrior", before describing him thoroughly, both his manner and appearance. The photographic sitting is mentioned, and the resulting



9. Sri Brahadamba Das Raja Ramachandra Tondaiman Bahadur, Raja of Pudukkottai (r. 1839–86) with his ministers, by Linnaeus Tripe, February/ March 1858. Albumen print. The British Library, London, Photo 952/(3).

10. "Ragwan Sing, Maharaj Rana of Dholepore", January 1867. Engraving after a photograph, from Louis Rousselet, *India and its native princes* (London, 1876).

image is published alongside the account, as an engraving (figure 10).

Rousselet's travels received wide publicity through his highly successful book, first published between 1871 and 1874 in *Le Tour du Monde*, before appearing as a volume in 1875 titled *L'Inde des Rajahs*, with an English edition the following year. As a complete narrative, the account is entertaining as Rousselet struggles to meet the rulers, and each successive encounter is a personal triumph, marked accordingly with the trophy portrait as evidence of the meeting.

Court Photography

While the British and European photographers set a style for portrait composition that drew on Western aesthetic conventions for late-18th-century oil portraits, Indian photographers who were working for a predominantly Indian clientele were responding to different demands with predictably different results. Embracing the new technology of the camera, a number of artists and photographers sought to incorporate aspects of photography into their existing visual culture. Photographs were over-painted, sometimes to such a degree that the photographic print was no longer visible. On other occasions the photographic image was copied by the artist to produce a painting. Occasionally a montage was created by cutting out segments from photographs and pasting them onto new photographs or painted backdrops. Then the whole work would be re-photographed. All this suggests that photography was not seen as a separate and distinct medium, but rather another aspect of an expanding visual culture that also embraced engravings, woodcuts, and chromolithographs. The blurring of these different media and their respective conventions, which has been particularly highlighted in recent work on devotional images, is evident also in royal portraiture from the late 19th and early 20th centuries.[7]

An early example of the overlap between photography and painting can be seen in a set of portraits in the British Library by photographer Ahmad Ali Khan, depicting the Nawab of Awadh and the women of the court. Reproduced in several recent publications, these works from c. 1851 combine the photographic portrait with an elaborately painted border and gold leaf nimbus applied above the sitter's head.[8] The intention is apparently to evoke the tradition of Mughal miniature painting. These portraits, evidently formal and intended to be seen in a public context, can be compared with more intimate examples by the same photographer, showing Nawab Wajid Ali Shah relaxing with his queen and daughter (figure 11). Ahmad Ali Khan had remarkable access to the women of the nawabi court, and he presumably took this photograph for the Nawab himself. The original photograph can no longer be traced. In 1857, along with other examples, it passed into the hands of an officer stationed in Lucknow and it is in his biography, published in 1914, that the photograph is preserved today.[9]

It is rare, however, to see such informal photographs of rulers. The exception to this rule is the self-portrait: several rulers took up photography as a hobby, depicting themselves and their family

11. Wajid Ali Shah, Nawab of Awadh with his queen Begam Akhtar Mahal Sahiba and daughter, by Ahmad Ali Khan, 1855–56. From W.L. Low, *Lieutenant-Colonel Gould Hunter-Weston of Hunterston … one of the defenders of Lucknow*, Selkirk, 1914.

members. Birchandra the Maharaja of Tripura (r. 1862–96) was an accomplished photographer, keeping abreast of technical developments through membership of the Bengal Photographic Society. His portrait of himself with his third wife Monomohini is remarkably intimate, as she drapes herself around him, placing a hand on his thigh (figure 12). Only photography, unlike any other visual medium of the time, could allow such a degree of naturalism.

Exemplifying the use of montage and paint in portraiture, a depiction of Wajid Ali Shah, now in the Alkazi Collection of Photography, was created by taking a photographic portrait of the ruler and pasting it onto a painted backdrop. The whole work was then re-photographed. Dating such a piece is problematic: although Wajid Ali Shah died in Calcutta in September 1887 and so must have sat for the original portrait before that point, it is possible that the creation of the montage and the re-photography took place at a later date. Consequently the question of authorship of the work is equally problematic, yet perhaps only so if it is approached within the Western traditions of history of art where such distinctions are demanded (figure 13).

Other courts introduced photography successfully, using the camera either to supplement existing artistic practices or to create an image of the state primarily for the colonial administration, through the "presentation album". Examples of the former can be seen in work by Mohan Lal at the Udaipur court, for example, who

12. Maharaja Birchandra of Tripura with his wife Monomohini, self-portrait, early 1890s. Gelatin silver print. Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Kolkata.

13. Wajid Ali Shah, Nawab of Awadh, by an unknown artist and photographer, early 1870s. Albumen print copy of a photo-collage. The Alkazi Collection of Photography, New Delhi (98.23.0238).

produced paintings which are either copied from photographs or at the very least, heavily influenced by them.[10] Mohan Lal's family had been painters at the Mewar court for several generations; his response to the arrival of photography was to learn to operate a camera, eventually going on to produce views that were deemed good enough for presentation to the Viceroy Lord Lansdowne.[11] Presentation albums generally consisted of fairly unremarkable architectural and landscape views, prefaced by a portrait of the ruler, designed to show the progressive nature of the princely state through photographs of libraries, hospitals, and new administrative offices. Madho Prasad, who worked for the Maharaja of Benares in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, was responsible for a number of different presentation albums containing views of the ghats, the city, Ramnagar, and Sarnath. The albums presented to the Viceroy Lord Reading in 1921 and to Lord Kitchener are now in the British Library.

14. Rama Varma, Maharaja of Travancore, GCSI, by the Nicholas Brothers, c. 1869. Albumen carte-de-visite. The Royal Collection © HM Queen Elizabeth II (RCIN 2701536).

Painted Portraits

Within the genre of the painted photographic portrait, there is great variation of style in the application of paint. Some examples use very little paint, allowing the surface of the photographic print to be seen clearly. Often the paint is only used to highlight certain elements, such as the jewellery or the face of the sitter (as in the early daguerreotype portrait of the Maharaja of Dhar). Other portraits strive for a realism that is familiar from the Western artistic tradition, when the entire surface of the photograph is over-painted. It is, however, unusual for topographical photographs to be over-painted. This is illustrated by a series commemorating a tour undertaken by Lord and Lady Napier in Travancore in 1869. The portraits of the Indian nobles and dignitaries have all been hand-painted, whereas the landscape and architectural views remain untouched. Produced by the Madras-based firm of Nicholas & Co., the portraits were presumably felt to be inadequate representations of the individuals and so were hand-coloured before being presented to the Napiers (figure 14).[12]

Because painted photographs were produced almost exclusively for Indian patrons, however, few examples found their way into collections outside India before the mid-20th century, when properties from the former princely states began to appear on the commercial markets. Unusually for the time, the British administrator Lewin Bentham Bowring (1824–1910) collected some fine examples in the 19th century, as part of his unpublished research on the genealogical histories of the rulers of India.[13] Bowring's papers, which are now housed in the British Library, contain over 500 objects, the majority being portraits of South Asian rulers.[14] Bowring attempts to outline the history of each ruling family, with names, dates, and relationships defined alongside a portrait – either a print, a photograph, or sometimes a photographic copy of a painting. He includes rulers from north and south India, descendants of extinct titles (such as a portrait of the eldest surviving son of Tipu Sultan, by Ferdinand Schwarzschild & Co.) and rulers from Nepal, Tibet, and other neighbouring countries.

One of the finest painted portraits in Bowring's collection shows the Maharaja of Mysore and his children (figure 15). During his posting to Mysore, Bowring would certainly have known the

Maharaja as a young man and may have deliberately sought out the best example available. The over-painting is technically excellent, with the folds of the young girls' saris clearly shown and the texture of the Maharaja's coat carefully highlighted. The close attention given to producing such a realistic portrait is evident, and the end result is a unique object comparable to a miniature painting.

Conclusion

This essay has surveyed all too briefly the different contexts in which photographic portraits were

15. Chamaraja Wadiyar IX, Maharaja of Mysore (r. 1868–94) and his children, by an unknown artist and photographer, 1890. Painted photograph. The British Library, London, Mss Eur. G38/1 (49).

produced, looking at studio portraits, surveys and ethnographic documentation, and painted photographs. It concludes by touching upon the use to which these photographs have been put in more recent years. Photographs of India's rulers, dressed in silks and covered in jewels, have become familiar as visual shorthand for luxury, oriental exoticism, and unchanging traditional society. To a certain extent, the descendants of the rulers are inevitably complicit in this image, as the business of attracting tourists to India has become a serious one. Photographs showing the present-day heads of former ruling families conducting traditional ceremonies and participating in regional events are common, and are important in suggesting an "authentic", untouched India. Lavishly illustrated coffee-table books also strive to create a colourful, romantic vision of India, assuring the reader in breathless tones that these "unforgettable" maharajas (although they exist in "forgotten private collections") lived anachronistic lives, worthy only of scandalous anecdotes.[15] Photography, capturing only a small part of the history of these great dynasties, shows how the rulers moved into the modern era, negotiating colonial administrations and political upheavals, attempting throughout to preserve some dignity as they presented themselves for posterity.

Notes

1. According to a short autobiographical note written by the photographer Lala Deen Dayal, "I was able to secure … a group of HRH the Prince of Wales (and the Royal Party in 1875–76)." This does not make it clear whether Dayal also accompanied the party on any part of the tour. Dayal's photographs of Jaipur from this time do not include the full "welcome" message for the Prince that was painted onto the hill above the city; the photographs in the Prince's albums, however, do show the full extent of the message. See "A Short Account of my Photographic Career by Lala Deen Dayal (in his own words), July 18th 1899", in The British Library, Mss Eur. D1132.

2. M. Evans, ed., *Princes as Patrons. The Art Collections of The Princes of Wales from the Renaissance to the Present Day*, London, Merrell Holberton Publishers in association with National Museums and Galleries of Wales and The Royal Collection, 1998, p. 150.

3. The principal Indian orders – the Star of India and the Order of the Indian Empire – were not awarded to women, with the exception of the Begam of Bhopal who received both as a sovereign prince. The Order of the Crown of India was founded in January 1878 for bestowal upon women only. Stephen Patterson, *Royal Insignia. British and Foreign Orders of Chivalry from the Royal Collection*, London, The Royal Collection & Merrell Holberton Publishers, 1996, p. 120.

4. The Queen's desire to learn more about her subjects in India in particular is further demonstrated by the series of painted portraits that she commissioned in 1886 from the Austrian artist Rudolph Swoboda. Saloni Mathur, *An Indian Encounter. Portraits for Queen Victoria,* London, The National Gallery, 2002.

5. John Falconer, *Colonialist Photography: Imag(in)ing Race and Place*, London, Routledge, 2002, p. 78.

6. Helene Lafont-Couturier and Pierre-Lin Renié, *L'Inde Photographies de Louis Rousselet 1865–68*, Bordeaux, Musée Goupil, Conservatoire de l'Image Industrielle, 1992, p. 39.

7. Christopher Pinney, *'Photos of the Gods': The Printed Image and Political Struggle in India*, London, Reaktion Press, 2004.

8. John Falconer, *India: Pioneering Photographers 1850–1900*, London, The British Library & The Howard and Jane Ricketts Collection, 2001; Sophie Gordon, "A City of Mourning: The Representation of Lucknow, India in Nineteenth-Century Photography", *History of Photography* 30: 1 (Spring) 2006, pp. 80–91.

9. W.L. Low, *Lieutenant-Colonel Gould Hunter-Weston of Hunterston … one of the defenders of Lucknow,* Selkirk, 1914.

10. Andrew Topsfield, ed., *Court Painting in Rajasthan*. Mumbai, Marg Publications, 2000, p. 10.

11. Mohan Lal's album *Views in Meywar*, once in the collection of Lord Lansdowne (Christie's 1994), is now in the Alkazi Collection of Photography.

12. Francis Napier, 10th Lord Napier, Governor of Madras 1866–72 and briefly Viceroy of India in 1872, following the assassination of Viceroy Lord Mayo in 1871.

13. Examples are reproduced in John Falconer, *A Shifting Focus: Photography in India 1850–1900*. London, The British Council, 1995, pp. 54–55. Bowring was Private Secretary to Viceroy Lord Canning 1858–62, and Chief Commissioner of Mysore and Coorg 1862–70.

14. The British Library, London, Mss Eur. G38/1-4.

15. E. Jaiwant Paul and Pramod Kapoor, *The Unforgettable Maharajas: One hundred and fifty years of photography*, New Delhi, Lustre Press, Roli Books, 2004.

Imperial Politicians and Bejewelled Barons

Changing Representations of Indian Princes after 1858

BARBARA N. RAMUSACK

From the 1850s onward, the evolving roles of the Indian princes as British clients and Indian political leaders would be reflected in new media of representation that would be directed to earlier audiences such as princely courts and British officials but also to new public audiences of Indian nationalists and broader populations in India and abroad. Beginning with a few transitional painted portraits of Indian princes, my essay examines the various forms and forums in which the princes portrayed the recasting of their roles within the British and Indian political structures and popular cultures. From the late 18th century onward the British transformed Indian kings into princely clients who were expected to provide military support when British control was threatened and to be loyal allies during peacetime. After the Revolt of 1857 Queen Victoria renounced any further British annexation of princely states and her Viceroy, Lord Canning, granted *sanads* or certificates to the princes that guaranteed their right to adopt heirs. Although the coexistence of direct and indirect rule was thereby formally affirmed, the British efforts to incorporate major princes more tightly into their governmental and economic structures did not represent a sharp break from the past. More innovative were the British policies to expand the visibility of the princes in a symbolic structure.

1. Portrait of Maharaja Karam Singh of Patiala. Patiala, Punjab plains, c. 1830. Opaque watercolour and gold on paper; 26.7 x 19 cm. Collection of the writer.

In 1861 Queen Victoria established a new order of honours, the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India to provide emblematic rewards of decorations to Indian princes as well as British officials for services rendered, and simultaneously to assign them into a hierarchy of status. Elaborate durbars, highly ritualized assemblies, were organized to demonstrate Indian loyalty and to display to the world the legitimacy accorded to British rule by the presence of collaborating Indians, particularly its princely clients. The most prominent were the Imperial Assemblage of 1877 where Victoria was declared Empress of India and established another system of honours, The Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire; the Imperial Durbar of 1903 held to celebrate the coronation of Edward VII but also to display the power and organizational skills of his viceroy, Lord Curzon; and the Imperial Durbar of 1911 when King-Emperor George V and Queen Mary became the first British rulers to visit India, the jewel in their crown.[1]

During and after the First World War the princes emerged on the European stage as imperial allies when they attended war conferences in London, the peace conference at Versailles, and meetings of the League of Nations in Geneva as representatives of India. Although its powers and rights were attenuated, the inauguration of the Chamber of Princes in 1921 provided annual gatherings in New Delhi for around 30 to 50 princes to discuss issues of concern in their relationship with the British but also their future within their states and within the British empire. The princes had more concrete opportunities to shape their future constitutional relationship with British India when they were invited to participate at the Round Table Conference in London in 1930 and 1931. During the same decades the princes acquired attributes of modern celebrities such as being featured in the press for sporting activities, sexual affairs, and extravagant lifestyles, especially their fabulous jewellery.[2] This essay focuses on how these political and cultural activities are reflected in the changing visual representations of the princes.

Survivor Princes – The Maharajas of Patiala

Lord Wellesley, Governor General from 1798 to 1805, inaugurated the subsidiary alliance system by which treaties were concluded with Indian kings who were to provide military assistance and loyal support for British policies in return for British protection from their internal rivals and external enemies. An early entry into this so-called treaty system in 1809 was Raja Sahib Singh (r. 1781–1813), the Sikh ruler of Patiala in the Punjab. Although many of them were relatively short-lived, the Patiala rulers embody the resiliency of those families who managed to survive as internally autonomous rulers until the integration of their states into independent India. Indeed Amarindar Singh, the scion of the Patiala dynasty, successfully adapted to electoral politics and became the Chief Minister of the state of Punjab in 2001.

With a few exceptions such as a notable essay by B.N. Goswamy in *The Arts of the Sikh Kingdoms*,[3] most art exhibitions and catalogues of Indian painting equate Sikh rulers with formidable Maharaja Ranjit Singh of the kingdom of Punjab and Maharaja Dalip Singh, who was a great favourite of Queen Victoria. Compared to the dramatic portraits of Dalip Singh who never ruled as an Indian prince, a painting from the 1830s of Maharaja Karam Singh of Patiala who was a capable ruler from 1813 to 1845 is austere (figure 1). Seen in profile against a soft blue background with a band of darker blue sky (that also appears in a painting of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, his more powerful neighbour from whom his grandfather had sought protection against the British), Karam Singh wears a simple, but elegant, white *jama* or long tunic of finely woven, diaphanous cotton with a green and gold striped *patka* or sash as the only element of colour. His jewels are an unpretentious three-strand necklace of pearls with emerald and gold pendants, a turban ornament of pearls and emeralds, and narrow armbands of gold set with emeralds. In one hand he holds a sword indicating his role as a warrior and defender of his kingdom. In the other hand is a prayer-ring testifying to his piety as a Sikh. A more prominent indication of his religious sanction to rule is the large halo with golden rays that encircles his face in profile. Although other Sikh princes frequently appeared without a halo, nimbate examples exist of Maharaja Ranjit Singh as well as of Karam's successor. This unpretentious painting indicates that even princes with relatively limited resources such as Karam Singh patronized painters, and were portrayed in a restrained manner but with appropriate symbols of secular and religious authority.

Narindar Singh (r. 1845–62), Karam Singh's son, who

succeeded him in 1845 at the age of 23, was a notably loyal ally of the British during the Revolt of 1857. Besides substantial gifts of territory and the award of the Star of India, Narindar was rewarded with an appointment to the new Central Legislative Council but died in 1862 before its first meeting. His son and heir Mahendra Singh (b. 1852, r. 1870–76) was invested with ruling power in 1870 and undertook a modest programme of reforms that included founding a college. Despite his short reign, Mahendra was awarded the Knight Grand Commander of the Star of India in 1871. Narindar's grandson, Rajinder Singh (b. 1872, r. 1890–1900) also succeeded as a young child and quickly achieved celebrity as a sportsman, especially in polo and pig-sticking, and as a patron and player of cricket. Although Rajput rulers such as Maharaja Ganga Singh of Bikaner and Maharaja Man Singh II of Jaipur became more acclaimed polo players and patrons, Rajinder's son, Maharaja Bhupinder Singh (b. 1891, r. 1910–38), and his grandson, Yadavendra Singh (b. 1913, r. 1938–48, d. 1974), maintained the family tradition as players and patrons of cricket. More importantly, Bhupinder Singh epitomized the princes who in the 20th century participated in imperial political arenas and gained notoriety for their opulent lifestyle. He attended the Imperial Durbar of 1911, served two extended terms as Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, and participated at the Round Table Conferences in London in 1930 and 1931.

However, most photographs reproduced in books on the princes emphasize Bhupinder Singh's passion for extravagant jewellery rather than his political activities. An early example is a photograph by Vandyk taken in 1911 when Bhupinder Singh was in England to play cricket (figure 2). Besides several strands of pearls and diamond necklaces, he wears a diamond star with a portrait of Queen Victoria. During the 1920s, like several other members of the Chamber of Princes such as Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala and Jam Saheb Ranjitsinhji of Nawanagar, Bhupinder Singh took his gemstones to European jewellers, first Boucheron and then Cartier in Paris, for resetting in more extravagant settings of platinum. Katherine Prior and John Adamson have argued that the rulers of so-called young states, namely those who originated during the 18th century such as the Sikh-ruled state of Patiala and the Maratha-ruled states of Baroda and Indore, were among the first princes to commission European jewellers to reset their jewels since they were not bound by traditions as

2. Sir Bhupinder Singh, Maharaja of Patiala, by Vandyk, July 5, 1911. Glass negative. 30.5 x 25.4 cm. National Portrait Gallery, London, Photographs Collection. NPGx98678.

were Rajput princes such as Maharaja Ganga Singh of Bikaner.[4] In their pursuit of modern designs for their jewels that signified their kingly wealth, the Indian princes stimulated the revival of so-called Oriental motifs in fashion. For example, the Indian practice of using cabochon or unfaceted gemstones launched a so-called barbarian style of jewellery at Cartier.[5] The jewellery of princes continues to feed the popular fascination with the princes as fantasy. In 2002 Cartier in New York displayed a replica of the elaborate diamond bib necklace (with synthetic stones in a platinum setting) that Bhupinder Singh ordered in 1928 and his son wears in a portrait in Usha Bala Krishnan's essay in this book. The *New York Times* reported:

> The crowds are lining up in front of Cartier on Fifth Avenue and 52nd Street, but they are not your average New York Christmas shoppers. They are passers-by staring, aghast, at a fabulous piece of antique jewelry [sic]. It's not even for sale. Nor was it made to satisfy a beautiful woman.
>
> It is an ornament made to adorn the chest of a man: the famous Patiala necklace, a Maharajah's Art Deco parade necklace, with giant gems and five rows of diamond-encrusted platinum chains.[6]

The Indian princes continue to be imagined as an exotic blend of Western luxury and Eastern fantasy but also men who challenge definitions of masculinity. A significant question is, how far did the activities and representation of the Patiala princes reflect what other princes were doing?

Princes, British Honours, and Changing Media of Representation

During the late 19th century Indian princes who had been inducted into British honours, most prominently the Star of India order, had their status commemorated in a variety of media. Many painted portraits of Indian princes wearing the regalia of their honours frequently presaged or followed the format of studio photographs that began to appear in the mid-19th century. During the 1860s Maharaja Ram Singh II (b. 1833, r. 1851–80) of Jaipur, a Rajput state that was an early client of the Mughal empire and then of the British empire, was painted in the robes of the Knight Grand Commander of the Star of India and with gloved hands (figure 3). Around his neck is the badge (but without the chain of Tudor roses) with the portrait of Queen Victoria who was the Sovereign of the Order. The format of a Victorian photograph is reflected in the floral rug, the background with a plain drapery on the right and columns to the left with a view to a garden of delicate greenery and flowers, and a table with a vase of flowers, a book, eyeglasses, and a quill pen and an inkwell. The items on the table indicate a literate ruler-administrator rather than a warrior prince and perhaps the fact that Ram Singh was a keen photographer himself.[7]

A more reproduced portrait c. 1880 is that of Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Marwar-Jodhpur attributed to Narsingh (see Bala Krishnan, figure 1). As in the painting of Ram Singh, Amy Poster has asserted that here "the artist's attention to modelling and recession in space suggests that he copied this portrait from a photograph".[8] In a similar Victorian setting with his hand resting on a table with flowers and books, Jaswant Singh more dramatically combines elements of European and Indian authority. Clothed in an Indian *jama* and turban and adorned with a spectacular necklace of emeralds and diamonds, he holds a lethal sword that symbolizes his Rajput status as a warrior but also his original role as a military ally of the British. At the same time he wears Western-style leather riding boots and the type of riding pants that came to be called jodhpurs, as if ready for action. His status in the British hierarchy of honours is prominently emblazoned by the collar, badge, and medallion of the Star of India. In contrast to the slight stature of Ram Singh of Jaipur, Jaswant Singh conveyed the romantic image of the tough and supposedly feudal Rajput prince with a combination of dress that indicates rugged masculinity and opulent luxury. Here again princely jewellery continues to attract contemporary popular interest. In 2004 Suzy Menkes in a special men's fashion supplement of the *New York Times* compared Jaswant Singh and Bhupinder Singh with Sean Combs with the comment that "even his [Combs'] boldest bling is nothing compared to the jewels of my fashion heroes: the Indian Maharajahs. The raj princes were the last male peacocks to understand the real power of gems." Moreover, "Rather than equating jewels with only machismo and money, the Indian aesthetic reflected a proud nobility."[9]

Another striking and rarely reproduced painted portrait of

an Indian prince reveals the influence of both photography and European painting techniques such as perspective, oil paints, and canvas as a surface. A native of the princely state of Travancore, Raja Ravi Varma (1848–1906) was initially acclaimed for his realistic portraits in oils and extolled for his depictions of episodes, heroes and heroines in Indian mythology.[10] The administrator of Baroda during the minority of Maharaja Sayaji Rao III (b. 1863, r. 1881–1939), an adopted heir, was Sir T. Madhava Rao, previously the Diwan or Chief Minister in Travancore where he knew Ravi Varma. In 1881 Sayaji Rao was invested with his ruling powers as Gaekwad of Baroda and Ravi Varma painted a nearly full-length portrait to commemorate the occasion. In it the Maharaja wears a black velvet dress military uniform trimmed in gold, a Maratha style of headcovering with a *sarpech* or turban ornament, a three-strand necklace of exceptionally large diamonds, and a medal with an indecipherable image. With neat sideburns and moustache and without the extravagant beards of his Rajput peers, he embodies a more modern masculinity as befits a prince who would soon be celebrated as a "progressive". Both similar and different from his Rajput counterparts, his left hand holds a sword but one so ornate that it was clearly ceremonial, and his right hand is on a table with the requisite books and quill pen of a literate-administrator, but directly on a call bell, a modern means of summoning his subordinates.[11] While he painted many portraits of both Indian and British officials but also of the two wives and younger female relatives of Sayaji Rao, Ravi Varma also produced images of Hindu mythological figures that he would later reproduce in oleographs for a mass audience.[12] Thus Sayaji Rao transformed the traditional kingly function of patronizing artists into a form of cultural nationalism by supporting an artist who created realistic images deemed modern that fostered an Indian and Hindu national identity.

3. Portrait of Maharaja Ram Singh II. Rajputana. Jaipur School, 1860s. Opaque watercolour and gold on paper; 25 x 20 cm. Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, George and Mary Rockwell Fund, acc. no. 2002.009.003.

Portraits of the one Indian woman ruler, Begam Shah Jahan (b. 1838, r. 1868–1901) of Bhopal are mainly photographs designed for British and Indian officials and friends but also a printed image reproduced for mass consumption. The third of five women rulers of the Pathan Muslim state of Bhopal in central India, Shah Jahan had a turbulent personal life dominated by a second marriage to Siddiqi Hassan, an ambitious but low-status employee of the court, and estrangement from her mother, Begam Sikander (b. 1816, r. 1844–68), and her daughter, Begam Sultan Jahan (1858–1930), who succeeded her in 1901 and ruled until 1926 when she abdicated in favour of her third son.[13] In a photograph from around 1872 and possibly by Bourne and Shepherd, Begam Shah Jahan stands with an uncovered face and her gloved right hand on a table with the usual vase of flowers, books and a small parasol, the one object along with her gloved hand indicating her femininity (see Jaffer, figure 4). It is noteworthy that compared to her male peers such as the Rajput princes, she displays little personal or state jewellery except for her jewelled hat which may function as a turban or a cover for her hair since she was a married woman. Wearing the trailing robes of the Knight Grand Commander of the Star of India with its collar

4a and b. "Her Highness the Begum Secunder, India" and "Princess Shah Jehan, India". Cigarette cards of Savage and Semi-Barbarous Chiefs and Rulers by W.S. Kimball & Co. Collection of Joyce and Dr Kenneth Robbins.

and badge over a knee length dress-like outfit, tight *churidar*, and Western-style shoes, she looks directly at the camera asserting her authority as a ruling princess despite her diminutive stature. Since she was notoriously estranged from her mother, it is ironic that at some point before the death of her mother, Princess Shah Jahan and Begam Sikander are featured on a series of cigarette cards of Savage and Semi-Barbarous Chiefs and Rulers issued by W.S. Kimball and Co. (figure 4). Perhaps to complement Sitting Bull who was the first chief listed in the series, Begam Sikander wears a colourful headdress of jewels and a curving plume, along with a badge of an unidentifiable British order. Her daughter wears a jewelled hat similar to one in the later photograph as well as a badge on her lapel. Although Indian princes and their female relatives began to appear in advertisements during the 20th century to sell commodities from expensive jewellery to luxurious travel to palace hotels, these early images of unveiled Muslim women rulers used to sell cigarettes, which neither of them should have smoked, are highly unusual. Since Siddiqi Hassan had insisted that his wife veil her face in public and observe purdah according to the strict Wahhabi practice in the year following their marriage in 1871, the images on the cigarette cards are probably from the 1860s. Following her mother's practice, Begam Sultan Jahan appeared veiled in public including the meetings of the Chamber of Princes until 1929.[14]

5. Kumar Shri Ranjitsinhji, caricature by Spy (Leslie Ward) in *Vanity Fair*, issue 1504, August 26, 1897, Princes No. 19, subsequently issued as a cigarette card. Collection of Joyce and Dr Kenneth Robbins.

Princes as Celebrities

By the late 19th century more Indian princes were achieving celebrity status and their images reached wider audiences. Shortly after Thomas Gibson Bowles founded *Vanity Fair* in 1868 as a weekly journal for British Society with a capital S, he added caricatures in coloured lithography. After some initial hesitation, "[I]t became a mark of recognition to be the 'victim' of one of the caricaturists hired by Bowles."[15] Indian princes appeared in *Vanity Fair* most prominently as sportsmen. Known as a vigorous batsman, Rajinder Singh of Patiala recruited English coaches to India, fielded a cosmopolitan Indian team when other Indian teams were communal, and patronized the first renowned Indian cricket player.[16] Playing initially for Cambridge, Ranjitsinhji of Nawanagar (b. 1872, r. 1907–33) became the first Indian in an English county team in 1895 and again to represent England at an international test match in Australia in 1896.[17] On August 26, 1897 a caricature of a youthful Ranjitsinhji, then just 25, appeared in *Vanity Fair* and was subsequently reproduced on a cigarette card (figure 5). Clothed in cricket whites and leg pads, he holds his bat nonchalantly behind his back. Some commentators assert that his face and hands are painted darker than they actually were and others say that Ranjitsinhji always wore his sleeves buttoned at the cuff to cover as much as possible of his skin, as in the picture. On January 4, 1900 shortly before he died on November 1, 1900, Rajinder Singh was portrayed as a polo player with a huge turban strapped onto his head and holding his polo stick in front as if to balance his spindly body. It was duly noted that he was also a Knight Grand Commander of the Star of India (GCSI). Throughout the 20th century cricket and polo remained the means for Indian princes to demonstrate their masculinity in elite British sports, and to enhance their contacts with British officials and certain strata of British and European society in general.

Princes in the Imperial Arena

Acting in their initial role as military allies of the British, many princes had wholeheartedly supported the British war effort from 1914 to 1918. The British Government recognized their contributions with invitations to War Conferences in London and the appointment of Maharaja Ganga Singh, a handsome, Western-educated Rajput ruler of Bikaner in the western desert of

Rajputana, as a representative of India at the Versailles Peace Conference. Although in the shadows by a pillar on the extreme left of the painting, Ganga Singh was included in "Some Statesmen of the Great War" by Sir James Guthrie now at the National Portrait Gallery (figure 6). Here the tall, muscular Indian prince wears a military uniform with a turban as the only Indian item of his apparel. He exemplifies a new generation of princes eager to participate in imperial politics and to appear as modernizing rulers capable of maintaining their legitimacy in a rapidly changing world. Ganga Singh would become the first chancellor of the Chamber of Princes inaugurated in 1921 and would share dominant role in that organization with an inner circle of like-minded princes including Maharaja Jey Singh of Alwar, Nawab Hamidullah Khan of Bhopal, Jam Saheb Ranjitsinhji

6. "Some Statesmen of the Great War", by Sir James Guthrie, 1924–30. Oil painting; 396.2 x 335.3 cm. On display at the National Portrait Gallery, London. NPG 2463.

7. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Maharaja Jey Singh of Alwar, and Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald at the first Round Table Conference, London, 1930. Oriental and India Office Collection, British Library, Photo 784/1 (85).

of Nawanagar, and Bhupinder Singh of Patiala. By the 1930s the annual meetings of the Chamber, which was largely advisory in function, witnessed raucous discussions and escalating jealousies as the princes debated constitutional options for their future existence. The group portraits of these annual gatherings did not reveal the temper tantrums and represented the princes as sober men wearing *sherwanis* or long frock coats and turbans with an occasional badge of the British orders, but no diamond, emerald, or pearl necklaces reset by Cartier. At the meeting of the Round Table Conference in late 1930 Maharaja Jey Singh of Alwar sits between Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, a leading Indian liberal (figure 7). During the tumultuous 1940s princes appeared in photographs either wearing military uniforms or Western suits. Only with the development of heritage tourism to the princely states did some erstwhile princes appear in *sherwani* or *jama*, but without their elaborate jewellery. By this time some had sold their jewels in Europe to raise ready cash, while others disputed whether their jewellery was personal or state property with the independent Government of India.

Notes

1. A sample of photographs from the 1903 and 1911 durbars appears in Charles Allen's book *Imperial Image: The Grand Durbars of 1903 and 1911,* in Vidya Dehejia et al., *India – through the Lens: Photography 1840–1911,* Washington DC, 2000, pp. 231–57.

2. Barbara N. Ramusack, *The Indian Princes and Their States,* Cambridge, 2004.

3. B. N. Goswamy, "Continuing Traditions in the Later Sikh Kingdoms", in Susan Stronge, ed., *The Arts of the Sikh Kingdoms,* London, 1999, pp. 165–79.

4. Katherine Prior and John Adamson, *Maharajas' Jewels,* Ahmedabad, 2001, p. 130. First published in 2000 by Editions Assouline Paris.

5. Judy Rudoe, *Cartier 1900–1939,* New York, 1997, pp. 163–64.

6. "An Heirloom is Resurrected at Cartier", by Wendy Moonan, *New York Times,* National Edition, November 20, 2002, B39. In a report on Christmas shoppers, the *New York Times* reported that "the big crowd pleaser on the avenue is Cartier's reconstructed $29 million diamond necklace [made for Patiala]." National Edition, December 22, 2002, ST4.

7. Yaduendra Sahai, *Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh II of Jaipur: The Photographer Prince,* Jaipur, 1996.

8. Amy G. Poster, et al., *Realms of Heroism: Indian Paintings at the Brooklyn Museum,* New York, 1994, p. 201.

9. Suzy Menkes, "Bling Dynasty", *New York Times Style Magazine, Men's Fashions, Fall 2004,* September 12, 2004, p. 100.

10. Ratan Parimoo, ed.. *The Legacy of Raja Ravi Varma, the Painter,* Baroda, 1998.

11. Ibid., p. 79.

12. For an assessment of the shifting critical evaluation of Raja Ravi Varma's mythological oeuvre, see Tapati Guha-Thakurta, *The Making of a New "Indian" Art: Artists, Aesthetics and Nationalism in Bengal, 1850–1920,* Cambridge, 1992, passim.

13. Shaharyar M. Khan, *The Begums of Bhopal: A Dynasty of Women Rulers in Raj India,* London, 2000.

14. Siobhan Lambert Hurley, "Out of India: The Journeys of the Begam of Bhopal, 1901–30", *Women's Studies International Forum,* Vol. 21, No. 3, 1998, p. 273.

15. Roy T. Matthews and Peter Mellin in *Vanity Fair,* London, 1982, p. 19.

16. Richard Cashman, *Patrons, Players and the Crowd: The Phenomenon of Indian Cricket*, New Delhi, 1980, pp. 24–47.

17. Satadru Sen, *Migrant Races: Empire, Identity and K.S. Ranjitsinhji,* Manchester, 2004, pp. 16–51.

Index

Page numbers in bold indicate captions

Abdal Khaliq **21**
Adil Shahis 65
Agra 30
Ahmad Ali Khan 14, 40, 119, **120**
Ahmedabad 12
Albert Edward, Prince of Wales 26, 74
Alexandra, Queen **112**
Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh 112, **112**
Alkazi Collection of Photography **75**, 120, **120**
Amritsar 25, 26
Annesley, George/Viscount Valentia 47
Archer, Edward 79
Arcot/Carnatic 12, **17**, 25, 46, 48
  Amir Al-Umara **17**, 18
  Azim-ud-daulah 48
  Azim Jah 25
  Ghulam Muhammad Ghaus 25
  Muhammad Ali Khan 12, **17**, 18, 46, 48
  Umdat Al-Umara **17**, 18
Auckland, Lord George Eden 25
Aurangabad 58
Awadh 11–13, 18, 23, 30, 32, 41, 42, 58, 60–62, 77, **77**, 78, **78**, 79, 119, **120**
  Akhtar Mahal Sahiba **120**
  Asaf-ud-daula 11, 13, 19, **31**, 32, 33, **33**
  Burhan-ul-Mulk 58
  Ghazi-ud-din Haider 23, 32, 33, **34**, 61, 78
  Mubarak-ud-daula 18
  Nasir-ud-din Haider 35, **39**, **78**, 79
  Saadat Ali Khan 33, **34**, 77
  Shuja-ud-daula 12, 18, 19, 62, 77
  Wajid Ali Shah 32, 35, 40–42, **40–43**, 79, 119, 120, **120**
  Zeenat Mahal **13**

Balmoral 70
Baroda 80, 85, 97, 112, **113**, 127, 129
  Sayaji Rao III 80, 129
Bassano, Alexander 115
Beechey, George Duncan 34
Benares 49, 52, 121
  Madho Prasad 121
  Maharaja of 121
  Ramnagar 121
  Sarnath 121
Bengal Photographic Society 120
Bengal/i 12, 19, 65
Bentinck, Lord William 11
Bercovitch, R. 62, **63**, 64
Bhopal 74, 114, 118, 129
  Hamidullah Khan 132
  Shah Jahan, Begam 74, **75**, 129, 130, **130**
  Sikander, Begam 74, **78**, 129, 130, **130**
  Sultan Jahan, Begam 129
Bhopal Singh **72**
Bijapur 46
Bikaner 127, 128, 131
  Ganga Singh 127, 128, 131, 132
Bombay 12, 23, 65, 110, 112, 118
Bonaparte, Napoleon 13, 48
Boucheron, jewellers 97, 127
Bourchier, Charles 18
Bourne and Shepherd **75**, **96**, 110, **112**, **113**, 114, 129
Bourne, Samuel 110
Bowles, Thomas Gibson 131
Bowring, Lewin Bentham 121
Brazil 16
Britain *see* England
British Library 19, **20**, 33, 50, **52**, **78**, 117, **117**, **118**, 119, 121, **122**, **133**
Brooklyn Museum, New York **84**
Burdwan, Maharaja of 25
Burma 84, **86**

Calcutta 12, 18–21, 23–26, 30, 33, 49, 53, 72, 112, 120
  Raj Bhavan 23
Cambridge University 131
Canning, Lord Charles 124
Cartier jewellers 14, 80, 89, **89**, 90, **90**, 97, 127, 128, 133
Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Kolkata **120**
Ceylon 84
Chamber of Princes 15, 126, 127, 130, 132, 133
China 12, 19, 24
Chinnaswami Nayakkan 49
Chinnery, George 23, 24
Christie's 90
Clive Collection, Powis Castle, Wales **49**
Clive, Lady Florentia 12, 48–50
Clive, Lord Edward 48
Clive, Lord Robert 12
Colombia 84, 85, 90
College of Fine Arts, Hyderabad 65
Combs, Sean 128
Company painting 13, 16–29, 44, 46, 48, 50, 53, 54, 61
Cooch Behar 70, **70**
  Sunity Devi 70, **70**
Coorg 115
  Victoria Gouramma 115, **115**
Curzon, Lord George 28, 126

D'Oyly, John Hadley 18
Daniell, Thomas and William 13, 32, 46, 61
Danish 50
De Beers 88–90, **89**
Deccan/i 14, 46, 48, 58, 60, 61, 64, 84, 85, 90, **92**, **94**, **95**
Deen Dayal, Lala 14, 64, **94**, 95
Delhi **13**, 15, 18–20, 24, **24**, 25, 28, 30, 58, 62, 72, 114, **120**, 126
Deuskar
  Gopal 65
  Kavita 65
  Ramkrishen Waman 64, **64**, 65, **65**
  Sukumar 64, 65, **65**
Devis, Arthur William 13, 18–21, **20**
Dhar 80, 117, **117**, 121
  Jaswant Rao Ponwar 117, **117**
Dholpur
  Ragwan Singh, Maharaj Rana 97, 118, **119**
  Nihal Singh 28
Dhrangadhra 97
Dickinson, J. 25, **25**
Dirks, Nicholas 12, 14
Dufferin, Lord Frederick 64

East India Company 11, 12, 14, 16, 18, 23, 32–35, 40–42, 46, 48, 52, 53, 60–62, 70, 74, 77–79
Eden, Emily 25, **25**
Edward VII, Prince of Wales 26, 70, 110, 112, **112**, 126
Elizabeth II Collection *see* Royal Collection
England/English 11–16, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25, 26, 29, 33, 34, 40, 41, 46–50, 52–54, 56, 60–62, 64, 68, 70, 72, 74, 75, 77–81, **79**, 84, 85, 87, 88, 94, 97, 104, 114, 115, 117–19, 121, 124, 126–31, 133
Eugenie, Empress 88, 97
Europe/an 11–16, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25, 26, 28, 32, 33, 35, 40, 42, 46–54, 60–62, 64–66, 72, 75, 77, 80, 81, 87, 104, 114, 115, 119, 126–29, 131, 133

Faiz Baksh, Begam 19, 20
Faizabad 13, 18
Farington, George 18
Farrukhabad 49
Fenton, Roger **115**
Flaxman, John 13, 48, 53, **54**
Fort St George Museum, Chennai 18
France 10, **59**, 60, 88, 118
Frankel, S. 90, **91**, **93**
Franz Ferdinand, Archduke of Austria 14
French Corps **59**, 60

Geneva 14, 126
Gentil, Jean-Baptiste 60
George III 48
George IV **79**
George V 117, 126
Gericke, Reverend Wilhelm 53
Goa 85
Golconda 46, 65, 84, 90
Government Museum, Chennai 49, **49**, 53, **53**
Government of India 87, 90, 94, 133
Great Britain *see* England
Griffiths, John 28
Guptas 87
Guthrie, James 132, **132**
Gwalior 85, 114

Hall, Sydney Prior 110
Hamilton, James **77**
Hastings, Francis, Marquess/Earl of Moira 13, 18–20, 32, 48
Heber, Bishop Reginald 48
Hendley, T.H. 105, 108
Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University **129**
Hickey, Thomas 18, 21, **21**, 23
Hodges, William 18, 61
Holkars 87, 90, 95, **96**
Home, Robert 13, 23, 34, 78
Hudson, Benjamin 25
Humphry, Ozias 13, 61
Husainabad Picture Gallery, Lucknow 33, **33**, **34**, 35, **38**, **39**, **41–43**
Hutchisson, William Henry Florio 24, **24**, 25

Hyderabad/i 11, 13, 14, 28, 46, 58–67, **59**, **60**, **62–65**, **67**, 85, 90, **91**, **93**, **94**, **96**, 114
  Abul Qasim, Syed 61
  Afzal-ud-daula, Asaf Jah V 62, **63**
  Afzul-Gunj Bridge 14
  Ahmad un-nisa 90, **91**, 94
  Alam Ali Khan 62, **63**
  Ali Khan 60
  Ali Zaman Khan 61, 62, **62**
  Chowmahalla Palace 64, 66, **91**, **93**, **94**, **96**
  Faluknuma Palace 66
  Farkhunda Ali Khan 62, **63**
  Humayun Jah 24, **24**
  Jubilee Hall 64, 65, **65**, **67**
  Mahbub Ali Khan, Asaf Jah VI 14, 28, 64, 90, 95
  Mahlaqa Bai **59**, 60
  Mir Alam 61
  Nasir-ud-daula, Asaf Jah IV **63**
  Nizam-ul-Mulk, Asaf Jah I **59**
  Osman Ali Khan, Asaf Jah VII 64, **64**, 90
  Qamar-ud-din Khan 58
  Saadat Khan 58
  Salabat Jah 90, **91**, **93**, 94, 95
  Syed Abdul Qasim **60**, 61
  Tahniyat Ali Khan 62
  Turab Ali Khan, Salar Jang I 62
  Turabaz Khan 62
  Yusuf Ali Khan, Salar Jang III 62, **63**, 64–66
  zenana studios 64, 95

Imperial Durbars 28, 72, 114, 117
India Office Library *see* British Library
Indore 75, 95, 97, 114, 118, 127
  Shivaji Rao 75
  Tukoji Rao II 26, **27**, 95, **96**
  Tukoji Rao III 75
Iraq 34

Jagdish and Kamla Mittal Museum of Indian Art, Hyderabad **9**, **10**
Jaipur/Amber 10, 15, 26, 90, 97–109, **103**, **105**, **107**, **111**, **112**, 127, 128, **129**
  Albert Hall Museum 105, **105**, **107**
  City Palace/Chandra Mahal 98, **99–103**, 108, **107–09**
  Dhola Rai 98
  Exhibition of 1883 105
  Ishvari Singh 100, **100**, 101, **107**
  Jagat Singh **102**, 103, 105
  Jai Singh II 98, 100, **100**, 105, 106, **107**
  Jai Singh III 103
  Jantar Mantar 106
  Kakilji 15, 98, **99**
  Madhavbihari Tanwarji temple 105
  Madho Singh I 101, **101**, 102
  Madho Singh II 105, **105**
  Man Singh I **105**
  Man Singh II 98, 108, **109**, 127
  Pratap Singh 102, **102**, 103
  Prithvi Singh 102
  Ram Singh II 103, **103**, 110, **111**, 112, **112**, 128, **129**
Jehangir Sorabji 114

Jewels of the Nizams **92**, **94**, **95**
Jey Singh, Alwar 132, 133, **133**
Johnson, Richard 61
Joyce and Dr Kenneth Robbins collections **130**, **131**

Kalan Khan 32
Kapurthala 70, 77, 80, 90, 97, 127
  Jagatjit Singh, Sir 70, 77, 90, 127
  Kaneri, Rani 70
Kashmir 80, 84
Kauffman, Angelica 78
Kettle, Tilly 12, 13, **17**, 18, 32, 48, 61
Kipling, Rudyard 8, 87
Kirkpatrick, James Achilles 61
Kishangarh
  Madan Singh Bahadur **116**, 117
Kitchener, Lord Horatio 121
Krishna, god 41, 56
Kurnool 12

Lafayette Portrait Studios **70**, **72**, **77**, 115, 117
Lahore 25, 26
  Dalip Singh 26, 126
  Fort Museum/Princess Bamba Collection 26, **27**
  Heera Singh **25**
  Kharak Singh 26
  Nau Nihal Singh 26
  Ranjit Singh 25, 26, **27**, 126
  Sher Singh 25, 26, **27**
Landseer, Edwin and George 26, **27**
Lansdowne Collection 28
Lansdowne, Lord Henry 121
Lauder, James 117
League of Nations 126
Lear, Edward 23
Liebert, Philip **79**
London 18, 19, 23, **23**, 25, 28, 33, **51**, 53, 60, 70, 75, 88, 89, 115, **116**, 117, **117**, 118, **118**, **119**, **122**, 126, 127, **127**, 131, **132**
Longcroft, Thomas 61
Louis XIV 10
Low, W.L. **120**
Lucknow 14, 18–21, 23, 30–43, 60, 61, 66, **77–79**, 119, **120**
  Amjad Ali Shah 35, **38**
  Hakim Mehdi 34
  La Martiniere College/Constantia 40
  Mohammed Ali Shah 34, **35**
  Qaisarbagh palace 40, 41
  Saadat Ali Khan 33, **34**
  Shah Najaf tomb 34
Lytton, Lord Edward 26, 72, 114

MacDonald, Ramsay 133, **133**
Madras 12, 18, 21, 23, 46–48, 54, 62, 117, 121
Magness, R.J.H. 35
Mahlaqa Bai **59**, 60
Malet, Charles Warre 23
Malwa 58
  Nizam-ul-Mulk 58
Mandi **9**
  Sidh Sen, Raja **9**
Marathas 13, 23, 25, 44–57, 75, 95, 101, 102, 127, 129
  Anglo-Maratha Wars 74
  Ekoji Bhonsle 44
  Madhu Rao Narayan, Peshwa 23, **23**
  Scindia, Mahadaji 23
  Shivaji 44
  Shivaji I 49
  Sujanbai 54
Martin, Claude 19
Marwar/ Jodhpur **6**, 74, **84**, 85, 128
  Gaj Singh II **6**
  Jaswant Singh 84, **84**, 85, 128
  Jawan Singh 11
  Sardar Singh **6**
Mary, Queen 126
Mayo, Lord Richard 112
Mempes, Mortimer 28, 29
Merrick, E.M. 68
Mewar 11, **72**, 101, 104, 120, 121
  Bhopal Singh **72**
  Jawan Singh 11
Middleton, Bishop Thomas 48
Mihr Chand 13, 32
Mittal, Jagdish 60, 64
Mochi painters 46
Mohan Lal 120, 121
Mordaunt, Colonel John 13, 19, 33
Mughals 8, 11, 12, 15, 18, 23, 25, 26, 30, 32, 33, 40, 47, 48, 58, 60, 65, 70, 74, 77, 78, 84, 85, 90, 95, 97, 98, 100, 102–05, 108, 119, 128
  Akbar 84
  Aurangzeb 11, 58
  Bahadur Shah Zafar **13**, 25, 62
  Jahangir 84, 87
  Jawan Bakht 18, 19, **19**
  Mirza Jawan Bakht 25
  Mirza Mughal 25
  Muhammad Shah 58
  Shah Alam 18
  Shah Jahan 11, 74, 84, 87
Müller, A.H. 15, 98, **99**, 106, **107**, 108, **109**
Murshidabad 18, 24, 25
  Mubarak-ud-daula 18
Mysore/Wars 21, 23, 46, 60, 85, **96**, 97, 114, 121, 122, **122**
  Chamaraja Wadiyar IX 87, 121, 122, **122**
  Hyder Ali 60
  Krishnaraja Wadiyar III 23, 85, **85**, 87, **96**, 97

Nabha 80
Nana Fadnavis 23, **23**
Napier, Lord Francis 121
Narsingh **84**, 128
Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art **38**
National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen 50, **50**
National Museum, New Delhi 53
National Portrait Gallery, London 19, 28, **116**, **127**, 132, **132**
Nawanagar 11, 90, **90**, 127, 131, 133
  Digvijaysinhji 90, **90**
  Ranjitsinhji 11, 90, **90**, 127, 131, **131**, 132
Nayakas 44, 46, 48, 53
Nicholas & Co. 121, **121**

Orchha **10**
  Sawant Singh **10**
Osborne House, Isle of Wight 28

Paigah 61, 66
Palmer, William 19, 20, **20**
Paris 65, 80, 88, 89, **89**
Patiala 14, **75**, 77, 80, **80**, 89, **89**, 90, 97, **125**, 126–28, **127**
  Amarindar Singh 126
  Bhupinder Singh 80, 88, 89, 127, **127**, 128, 133
  Karam Singh **125**, 126
  Mahendra Singh **75**, 77, 88, 127
  Narindar Singh 126, 127
  Rajinder Singh 80, **80**, 88, 89, 127, 131
  Sahib Singh 126
  Yadavendra Singh 88, 89, **89**, 127
Patna 52, 97
Persian 12
Place, George 33
Pondicherry 60
Poona 12, 23
  Raj Bhavan 23
  Shaniwarwada Palace 23
Post, Frans 16
Pran Nevile Collection **13**
Prinsep, Val 28
Pudukkottai 10, 14, 75, 118, **118**
  Ramchandra Tondaiman 118, **118**
Punjab 25, 26, **125**, 126

Queiros, Joseph 32

Raja Deen Dayal and Sons **94**
Rajput/ana 12, 47, 48, 84, 101, 103, 104, 118, 127–29, **129**, 132
Rampur 80
Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi 24, **24**
Ratlam 118
Ravi Varma 85, **85**, 97, 129
Raymond, Michel-Joachim Marie **59**, 60, 61
Reading, Lord Rufus Isaacs 121
Renaldi, Francesco 19
Rewa, Maharani of 68
Roe, Thomas 84
Rohillas 62
Roorkee Engineering College 64
Rousselet, Louis 118, 119, **119**
Royal Academy, London 18, 28
Royal Asiatic Society, London 23, **23**
Royal Collection 14, 23, 26, 28, 79, 110, **111–15**, **121**
Royal College of Art, Kensington 65
Rundell, Bridge & Rundell & Co. **79**

Sahib Ram 98, 100, **100**, **101**, 102–06, **102**, **107**
Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad **59**, 60–62, **60**, **62–64**, 65, 66
Salt, Henry 47
Santiniketan 65
Sapru, Tej Bahadur 133, **133**
Sarasvati Mahal Library, Thanjavur **46**, **47**
Sauda 11
Schoeft, August Theodor 25, 26, **27**
Schwartz, Reverend C.F. 14, 48, 53, 54, **54**
Schwarzschild, Ferdinand & Co. 121
Scott, Allan Newton 64
Secunderabad 62
Seringapatam 18, 21, 23
  Fort Museum 18
Shorapur 12
Shore, John 32
Siddiqi Hassan 129, 130
Sikhs 25, 80, 126, 127
Sinhas of Paikpara 25
Sir Jamsetji Jejeebhoy School of Art, Bombay 65
Sleeman, William 41, 42
Spy (Leslie Ward) 11, **131**
State Museum, Lucknow 33, **34**, **35**, 40, **40**
Swoboda, Rudolf 28, **28**

Tagore, Rabindranath 65
Tanjore/Thanjavur 11, 13, 44–57
  Amar Singh 46, 47, 49, **49**, 50–52, **51**
  Brihadisvara temple 46, 47, 54, **56**
  Durbar Halls 48, 53, 54, **54**, **55**
  Fort 53, **54**
  Pratap Singh 47, **47**, 48
  Serfoji II/Sarabhoji 13, 14, 46–54, **46**, **49–54**, 56
  Shivaji II 46, **46**, 52–54, **55**, 56
  Tulajaji II 46–48, **47**, 50–52, **51**, 54, **56**
Tate Gallery, London 19, 33
Taylor, Robert 72
Tipu Sultan 18, 21, **21**, 23, 60, 121
Tod, James 104
Tonelli, Anna 48
Torin, Benjamin 47
Tranquebar/Tharangambadi 50
Travancore 85, **114**, 115, 121
  Lakshmi Bhayi **114**
  Rama Varma **121**
  T. Madhava Rao 129
Tripe, Linnaeus 54, 117, 118, **118**
Tripura
  Birchandra 120, **120**
  Monomohini 120, **120**

Udaipur *see* Mewar
Uprising of 1857 14, 26, 62, 66, 70, 72, 74, 118, 124, 127
Uttar Pradesh 30

Vandyk, Carl 115
Vandyk, Herbert 115
Vandyk studios 115, **116**, 117, 127, **127**
Vanity Fair 131, **131**
Vellore 23
Venkatachalam **59**, 60, 62, 64
Vereshagin, Vasilii Vasilievich 26
Victoria and Albert Museum, London 18, 19, 23, 50, **51**, **56**, **70**, **72**, **77**, 79, **79**
Victoria Memorial, Kolkata 19, **21**, 23, 25, 26, 28
Victoria/n 14, 26, 28, 62, 68, 70, **70**, 72, 84, 88, 112, 114, **114**, 115, 124, 126–28
Vienna 26
Vijayanagara 44
Vizianagram 70
  Appala Kondyamba 70
  Raghuraj Singh 69
  Vijayarama Gajapathi Raju 70

W.S. Kimball & Co. 130, **130**
Wales, James 23, **23**
Waterhouse, James **78**, 118
Wellesley, Lord Richard 126
Wheeler, J. Talboys 114
Whistler, James McNeil 28
William IV 24
Willison, George 18
Winterhalter, Franz 26

Zebrowski, Mark 61, 64
Zoffany, Johann 13, 18–21, **19**, 23, **31**, 32, 33, 61

CONTRIBUTORS

Rosie Llewellyn-Jones, an alumnus of the University of London (SOAS), is a historian who has been writing about India for the past 30 years. *A Fatal Friendship: the Nawabs, the British and the City of Lucknow* was published in 1985 and further books on Lucknow and its inhabitants followed, including *Lucknow: Then and Now* for Marg (2003). Her latest book *The Great Uprising in India 1857–58: Untold Stories Indian and British* (2007) is an unconventional and provocative look at what many Britons still call the Indian Mutiny. She currently lectures on the "Arts of Asia 1500–1900" course at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London. Dr Llewellyn-Jones visits India at least once a year and is presently researching the life of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah.

Charles Greig is an art dealer, collector, lecturer, and writer. Author of *Landscape Paintings in the Victoria Memorial Collection – Catalogue*, he also contributed to the Marg volume *The Victoria Memorial Hall Calcutta: Conception, Collections, Conservation* (1998).

Indira Viswanathan Peterson is a Professor at the Asian Studies Department, Mount Holyoke College, Massachusetts, and a specialist on south India, particularly Tanjore, and its ruler Serfoji. She has published several articles in books and journals, including the Marg volumes *Eternal Kaveri* (1999) and *Chidambaram: Home of Nataraja* (2004).

Amin Jaffer is International Director of Asian Art at Christie's and holds a particular responsibility for developing their brand and business in India and among Indians globally. He specializes in Indian art in the age of European influence. For 13 years a curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum, Jaffer is author of *Furniture from British India and Ceylon* (2001), *Luxury Goods from India* (2002), and *Made for Maharajas: a design diary of Princely India* (2006). Jaffer was co-curator of the V&A's blockbuster 2004 exhibition "Encounters: the meeting of Asia and Europe, 1500–1800". He lectures frequently in Europe, America, and India and contributes regularly to journals and major newspapers.

Usha Bala Krishnan has a doctorate in Ancient Indian Culture and a degree in Museum Studies from USA. She has worked for the Brooklyn Museum, New York and was Sotheby's India representative. She is one among the very few historians of Indian jewellery, and the author of *Dance of the Peacock: Jewellery Traditions of India* and *Jewels of the Nizams*. She is currently working on several publications related to jewellery, design, and lifestyles in ancient and contemporary India. A fine arts consultant based in Mumbai, Usha lectures at the SNDT University.

Vibhuti Sachdev is an architect and a specialist on India's traditional knowledge systems. She was Lecturer in History of Art at the University of Sussex, where she is now Honorary Research Fellow in the School of Humanities. **Giles Tillotson** was Reader in History of Art in the University of London (SOAS) and is a specialist on India's later architectural traditions, especially in Rajasthan. He edited the Marg volumes *Stones in the Sand: The Architecture of Rajasthan* (2001) and *James Tod's Rajasthan* (2007). Together Tillotson and Sachdev have written extensively on the arts of Jaipur, including *Building Jaipur: The Making of an Indian City* and *Jaipur City Palace*.

Sophie Gordon is the Curator of the Royal Photograph Collection at the Royal Library, Windsor Castle. Prior to that she was Associate Curator at the Alkazi Collection of Photography. She specializes in photography from South Asia, contributing most recently to *Vijayanagara Splendour in Ruins* (2008). Other publications include *Noble Hounds and Dear Companions. The Royal Photograph Collection* (2007).

Barbara N. Ramusack is Charles Phelps Taft Professor of History at the University of Cincinnati. Her major research interests are the princely states of India (which culminated in *The Indian Princes and their States* in the *New Cambridge History of India*, 2004) and women's history. Her current research on maternal and infant health in colonial Madras and Mysore combines these two topics through the lens of medical history. A recent essay is "Women's Hospitals and Midwives in Mysore, 1870–1920: Princely or Colonial Medicine" in *India's Princely States: People, Princes and Colonialism* edited by Waltraud Ernst and Biswamoy Pati (2007).

Forthcoming Volumes

SINDH:
Past Glory, Present Nostalgia
edited by Pratapaditya Pal
September 2008

PORTS, TOWNS, AND CITIES:
A Historical Tour of the Indian Littoral
edited by Lakshmi Subramanian
December 2008

MARG books are also available on subscription at a subsidized price. To subscribe, visit us at www.marg-art.org

Captions for cover images
Front (clockwise from top left): Peshwa Madhu Rao Narayan with Nana Fadnavis, RAS, London; Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Marwar-Jodhpur, The Brooklyn Museum, New York; Maharani Sunity Devi of Cooch Behar, Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Back: Two sons of the Nawab of Arcot, Christie's Images Ltd.

Spine: The Gaekwad of Baroda, Bourne and Shepherd.

Exclusively distributed in India by
THE VARIETY BOOK DEPOT
AVG Bhawan
M-3, Connaught Circus
New Delhi 110 001
Phone: 011-23417175, 23412567, 23415030
Fax : 011-23415335, 41517201
Email : varietybookdepot@rediffmail.com

Marg publications

(National Centre for the Performing Arts)
Army & Navy Building, 3rd Floor
148, Mahatma Gandhi Road
Mumbai 400 001, India
www.marg-art.org

ISBN 81-85026-86-6

Rs 2500.00 / US$ 65.00